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# The Army in a Changing World

## The Role of Organizational Vision

John K. Setear, Carl H. Builder,  
M. D. Baccus, Wayne Madewell



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The research described in this report was sponsored by the United States Army, Contract No. MDA903-86-C-0059.

ISBN: 0-8330-1038-7

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Published by The RAND Corporation  
1700 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90406-2138

Unclassified

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER R-3882-A	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) The Army In A Changing World: The Role of Organizational Vision		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED interim
7. AUTHOR(s) J. K. Setear, C. H. Builder, M. D. Baccus E. W. Madewell		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS RAND 1700 Main Street Santa Monica, CA 90401		9. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s) MDA903-91-C-0006
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS Office of the Chief of Staff Hq US Army (DACS-DMC) Washington, D. C. 20301		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		12. REPORT DATE June 1990
		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 88
		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) unclassified
		16. DEC. ASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)  Approved for Public Release; Distribution Unlimited		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)  No Restrictions		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Military Organizations Military Planning Army		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)  See reverse side		

DD FORM 1 JAN 73 1473

EDITION OF 1 NOV 68 IS OBSOLETE

Unclassified  
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

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This report is about the Army's future and the role an organizational vision for the Army can play in that future. The authors suggest that for an Army that wishes to adapt to the changing national security planning environment, the key element is the Army's vision of itself, its sense of identity and purpose, of what it is and what it is about. While the Army's essential institutional planning problem over the past 40 years has largely been one of managing budget, personnel, and technological resources, the problem for the future may involve reconceiving the Army to meet new threats to the nation's security or to minimize institutional damage. Although the Army has no explicitly acknowledged current organizational vision, its institutional thoughts and actions do reflect a widely shared sense of identity and purpose as the ready armored defender of Central Europe. If the authors' projections of planning trends materialize, this current vision puts the Army on a collision course with what is perceived as its post-Cold War future. A fundamental choice may have to be made between the Army's current combat role and its former historical role as a provider of noncombat military services to the nation. Of the eight alternative visions of the Army that the authors pose, they believe the most relevant and realistic ones call for a U.S.-based Army performing general military service that may rely on either active or reserve forces.

Unclassified

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE(When Data Entered)

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# **The Army in a Changing World**

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John K. Setear, Carl H. Builder,  
M. D. Baccus, Wayne Madewell

June 1990

Prepared for the  
United States Army



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## **PREFACE**

This report is about the Army's future and the role an organizational vision for the Army can play in that future. Looking at the Army from the top down, the report documents the findings of research undertaken by the authors to explore the major issues confronting the Army in the future. The research, completed in February 1990, deals with the Army as an institution in a changing world and national security environment, with the problems the Army will face because of those changes, and with ways the Army can deal with those problems through its own sense of identity and purpose. This report should therefore be of interest to all those concerned with finding a new strategy or approach for the Army in a post-Cold War national security environment.

### **THE ARROYO CENTER**

This report was sponsored by the U.S. Army and prepared at The RAND Corporation's Arroyo Center, the Army's federally funded research and development center for studies and analysis. The Arroyo Center provides the Army with objective, independent analytic research on major policy and management concerns, emphasizing mid- to long-term problems. Its research is carried out in five programs: Policy and Strategy; Force Development and Employment; Readiness and Sustainability; Manpower, Training, and Performance; and Applied Technology. This report is a result of research being conducted under the Policy and Strategy program in an exploratory project on the Army's institutional futures.

Army Regulation 5-21 contains basic policy for the conduct of the Arroyo Center. The Army provides continuing guidance and oversight through the Arroyo Center Policy Committee, which is cochaired by the vice chief of staff and by the assistant secretary for research, development, and acquisition. Arroyo Center work is performed under contract MDA903-86-C-0059.

The Arroyo Center is housed in RAND's Army Research Division. The RAND Corporation is a private, nonprofit institution that conducts analytic research on a wide range of public policy matters affecting the nation's security and welfare.

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## SUMMARY

### RESEARCH PROBLEM

Over the past 40 years, the institutional planning problem for U.S. military services has been mostly one of managing resources—in budgets, personnel, and technology—to meet the nation's military commitments and threats. However, if the foreseeable future turns out to be a sharp departure from the past 40 years, the Army's institutional planning problem could be quite different—not mostly one of managing resources, but of *reconceiving the Army* in order to meet new threats to the nation's security or to minimize institutional damage to the Army.

### A CHANGING NATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

The international and U.S. security arenas are now undergoing several simultaneous changes that will likely force the Army—perhaps even more than its sister services—to make difficult choices in the next decade. Although this premise cannot be proven before the verdict of history, we find compelling evidence in such changes as

- The prospects for sharply declining military budgets;
- A rapidly expanding scope of arms control agreements;
- Shifting perceptions of alliance obligations, U.S. interests, and, most dramatically, threats to those interests; and
- Evolutions, if not revolutions, in the technical, institutional, and social environments in which the Army functions.

### The Challenge of These Changes to the Army

Some—perhaps many—of these changes could take the form of unexpected or unwelcomed challenges for the Army's leadership—challenges that will tend to preoccupy the Army staff and to encourage reactive decisions.

- The role of military capabilities may be less in waging war (or in deterring the threat of war) and more in deliberate activities to prevent or limit war and to maintain the peace.
- Active military forces will likely shrink, perhaps significantly.
- Conventional forces for major, sustained conflicts will likely be deferred to mobilization rather than maintained for readiness.



- Forward basing may decline, if not disappear—possibly suddenly.
- Ready forces committed into combat will likely be smaller and more mobile, designed for quick insertions as tokens of political commitment or outrage and limited to tasks that can be accomplished rapidly, decisively, and/or with minimum casualties.
- The meaning of national security will likely expand from its previous focus on military means for containing communism to dimensions beyond military power, and from a few, traditional points of “vital interest” to the world at large.

### **Using an Organizational Vision to Deal with Challenges**

To meet such challenges effectively and efficiently, the Army will need a clear sense of itself and what it is about—concepts that will transcend the issues or problems of the day, yet serve as reliable maps for their resolution. These concepts should guide the Army as an institution to adapt to or accommodate its changing environment.

We call this sense of identity and purpose an “organizational vision.” An organizational vision can be a powerful instrument for an institution’s well-being. The study of organizations facing changes reveals that the single most determining factor of success in their adaptation is whether or not they have and can exploit an appropriate vision of themselves for decisionmaking. Such visions can give an organization’s members a shared sense of identity and purpose that helps to clarify and coordinate their decisionmaking.

Thus, we have decided to approach the decisions the Army must make from a top-down, organizational perspective, devoting particular care to “who” the Army is and what it is about. Consequently, we have adopted an approach we imagine someone responsible for the well-being of any large organization might take:

- First, we determine the current essence of the organization, its sense of its own identity and purpose.
- Next, we decide if the current sense of organizational identity and purpose will adequately serve the organization in its likely future environment.
- Finally, we determine whether the organization’s current outlook seems likely to hinder or to help it in the future in identifying, and choosing among, new and alternative senses of identity and purpose for the organization.

## THE ARMY'S CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

Although the Army has no explicitly stated organizational vision, we believe the Army's thoughts and actions do reflect a single, dominant, widely shared sense of identity and purpose: the instantly ready armored defender of central Europe.

Despite the Army's willingness to fight wherever the nation asks it to, its focus on high-intensity conflict in *central Europe* is incontestable: Approximately one-fourth of the Army has both its equipment and its personnel forward deployed in central Europe; another fourth has, or will have, a full set of its equipment stockpiled there; and approximately another fourth beyond these units is earmarked for the single subtheater of central Europe.

The Army's vision of itself as an *armored* defender of central Europe is almost as obvious: Of the 18 active divisions, 10 are dominated by battalions of tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, or armored personnel carriers, as are *all* the forward-deployed units.

The Army also clearly strives to be the *instantly ready* armored defender of central Europe. It keeps hundreds of thousands of soldiers forward deployed in Europe, ready both geographically and operationally to fight—in central Europe, at least—on very short notice. Even with forces not earmarked for central Europe, the Army aims to have them highly trained and ready today, rather than prepared to serve as the cadre for a massive, long-haul buildup.

The current Army has made another choice—one so pervasive and so successfully ingrained that we need the perspective pre-World War II history offers to see that there was even a choice to be made: The Army has focused upon its combat power on the battlefield, rather than upon its historical provision of general military services to the nation. The current Army prepares itself to fight (outnumbered) and win (the first battle); in the past, the Army concerned itself with a whole range of noncombat tasks sensibly performed by active-duty soldiers, including patrolling U.S. frontiers (for example, territories after the Civil War), mobilizing the citizenry, and building canals and dams.

## THE ARMY'S CURRENT VISION AND THE FUTURE

If our projections of the trends in the military planning environment are anywhere close to correct, the Army's current vision puts it on a collision course with the onrushing future:

- The Army seeks to be instantly ready, but high day-to-day readiness is expensive and difficult to justify: Budgetary pressures are

high, memories of large-scale U.S. involvement in combat are approximately two decades old, and most analysts see the prospects of such involvement in the future as even less likely than they were in the past.

- The Army's heavy armored forces are expensive and are tailored to high-intensity warfare in central Europe—at a time when prospects of a war in Europe and the Soviet threat appear to be diminishing.
- The forward deployments of U.S. forces are the linchpin of the current Army vision, but public pressure to pull that pin is growing in both the host nations and the United States.
- The Army has focused on combat power at a time when the United States—and, indeed, even the Defense Department—seems increasingly hesitant to commit forces to large-scale combat and when the nation perceives a host of new or unconventional threats to its security, such as terrorism, drugs, illegal immigration, economic decline, infrastructural decay, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and environmental damage.

The Army needs to develop “early warning” criteria to determine when a shift is necessary, but it should begin now to consider alternative visions and their implications.

## ALTERNATIVE VISIONS OF THE ARMY

We have formulated alternative visions around the answers to three fundamental questions (choices) we find implicit in the Army's current vision:

1. Will a significant part of the Army be forward deployed?
2. Will the Army rely mostly on active-duty or reserve forces?
3. Will the Army be mostly about combat power or general military service?

Because the answer to any one of these questions is theoretically independent from the answers to the other two, eight visions are possible:

1. A forward-deployed Army focused on the combat power of its active forces; this is the Army's current vision of itself as the “instantly ready armored defender of central Europe”;
2. A centrally based (U.S.-based) Army focused on the combat power of its active forces, which we call the “global expeditionary force”;

3. A forward-deployed Army focused on the combat power of its reserve forces, which we call the "cadre of democracy";
4. A forward-deployed Army focused on general military service performed by active forces, which we call "soldiers on the front lines";
5. A centrally based Army focused on the combat power of its reserve forces, which we call the "arsenal of democracy";
6. A centrally based Army focused on general military service performed by active forces, which we call the "nation's military servant";
7. A forward-deployed Army focused on general military service performed by reserve forces, which we call "soldiers on the spot";
8. A centrally based Army focused on general military service performed by reserve forces, which we call the "army of planners."

### Evaluating the Visions

Although recognizing that the Army's choice is almost certainly not limited to these eight visions, for illustrative purposes we have considered the problem of choosing among them. Among the factors we have considered are the following:

- The Army does not have an equal amount of control over the answers to each of the three fundamental questions. It has the most control over whether it will be focused on combat power or general military service, and the least control over whether it will continue to have substantial portions of its force deployed overseas.
- Different visions will likely require different levels of resources, with the Army's current vision likely to be the most expensive of our eight alternatives and the army of planners the least expensive. The realism of different visions will depend in part upon their resource requirements, especially if the Army's budgets will be tightly constrained for an extended period of time.
- Apart from resource requirements, alternative visions will have different implications for the Army's force structure, doctrine, training, and a host of other activities that now derive from its current vision. Some of these aspects of the current Army may be relatively easier to change than others, while still others may be relatively unaffected by the choice.

- The choice of a vision will depend upon balancing the sometimes competing concerns for its realism, relevance, clarity, distinctiveness, positiveness, and abilities to inspire and to be communicated.

### Our Assessment

Of the eight visions we explored, the most relevant and realistic posited a centrally based Army performing general military service. Such an Army could take one of two forms: the nation's military servant or the army of planners, depending on whether the Army relied mostly on its active or reserve forces. If the Army realizes soon enough that it needs a new organizational vision—before the advent of the political, economic, and social changes that appear to be coming—it can avoid being forced into becoming an army of planners, with most of its capabilities in the reserves. If that new vision is adopted soon enough, the Army should be able to convince the American public to provide the resources it needs to become the nation's military servant. That Army would be smaller than today's Army, and certainly more conscious of the need to be prepared to mobilize the nation's industrial and manpower reserves in case of a significant war, but its active component would still be potent enough to handle the Army's most likely combat responsibilities and its broader spectrum of military duties.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our colleagues Edison Cesar, Martin Goldsmith, and Ken Watman generously shared their views of alternative futures and Army adaptations. Maj. Gen. Aubrey S. Newman, United States Army (retired), provided us with a perspective of the Army shaped by decades of close observation. Paul Bracken and William Schwabe reviewed an earlier draft and offered many constructive suggestions to clarify and sharpen our theories and arguments. Carol Zaremba ably managed the evolution of our manuscript into print.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### RESEARCH CONCEPT

The research we report here is about the future of the Army as an American military institution in a rapidly changing international and national security environment. It was undertaken in response to questions posed by Stephen M. Drezner, vice president of RAND's Army Research Division and director of the Arroyo Center:

What lies ahead for the Army, and what can we do to help it in finding its way in that future? The Arroyo Center research programs are intended to build up from the specific to some broader answers, but what answers might emerge from an independent, top-down look at the questions?

The research to answer these questions was broadly conceived. We deliberately explored them from a top-down perspective, pursuing several different tactical objectives. Along the way, we employed various intellectual devices, such as

- Contemplating the development of a short, first-priorities agenda for the next Army chief of staff;
- Eliciting alternative conceptualizations of the future Army and testing them through seminars and drafts of white papers and mock speeches;
- Investigating the historical behavior of institutions in adapting to changing environments;
- Exploring various hypotheses about the historical evolution of the Army in response to events and to its circumstances.

The results of some of these lines of inquiry, although contributive, were not pursued to the point where they warranted specific inclusion here. Other results we deemed sufficiently meritorious and independent to be reported elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Thus, we do not report here all the research undertaken—only those portions that have not been published elsewhere and that we deemed essential contributions to the research findings.

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<sup>1</sup>See Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Md., 1989, particularly pp. 36-38, 138-142, and 185-193. Also see Carl H. Builder, *Patterns in American Intellectual Frontiers*, The RAND Corporation, N-2917-A, forthcoming.

## RESEARCH PROBLEM

Over the past 40 years, the institutional planning problem for U.S. military services has been mostly one of managing resources—in budgets, personnel, and technology—to meet the nation's military commitments and threats. Though all these parameters have changed through fluctuations or evolutions, none of the changes have been truly revolutionary. Budgets fluctuated up and down, the division of resources between the services moved back and forth a few percent, and the Soviet threat grew steadily in quantity and quality. Even the changes in military planning introduced by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in the 1960s were more in the process than they were in the substance or nature of the problem.

If the foreseeable future is mostly a continuation of the path trodden over the past 40 years, the institutional planning problem will be so, too. The Army will simply want to do better at what it has learned to do through 40 years of experience and continuous efforts to improve its planning processes. If this is the future, our research can only hope to suggest additional adjustments—for the Army and for the Arroyo Center research agendas—that might help the Army meet the future challenges of managing its resources.

But if the foreseeable future turns out to be a sharp departure from the past 40 years, the Army's institutional planning problem could be quite different—not mostly one of managing resources, but of *reconceiving the Army* in order to meet new threats to the nation's security or to minimize institutional damage to the Army. These different futures pose the more interesting challenge for this research—first, because they seem more likely to us, and second, because they force us to explore more new intellectual ground.

Thus, the research we report here begins with the premise that the international and American security arenas are now undergoing several simultaneous changes likely to confront the Army—perhaps even more than its sister services—with difficult choices in the next decade. Although this premise cannot be proven before the verdict of history, we find compelling evidence in such changes as

- The prospects for sharply declining military budgets;
- A rapidly expanding scope of arms control agreements;
- Shifting perceptions of alliance obligations, U.S. interests, and, most dramatically, threats to those interests;
- Evolutions, if not revolutions, in the technical, institutional, and social environments in which the Army functions.

Some—perhaps many—of these changes could take the form of unexpected or unwelcome challenges for the Army's leadership—challenges that will tend to preoccupy the Army staff and to encourage reactive decisions.

To meet such challenges effectively and efficiently, the Army will need a clear sense of itself and what it is about—concepts that will transcend the issues or problems of the day, yet serve as reliable maps for their resolution. These concepts may take different forms—agendas, visions, plans—but they share the common purpose of guiding the Army as an institution to adapt to or accommodate its changing environment.

## RESEARCH PRODUCTS

The research findings fall naturally into six categories that constitute the next six sections of this report:

1. The changing international and national security environments' effects on the Army;
2. The general utility and characteristics of an organization's sense of purpose and identity, which we call an "organizational vision";
3. The Army's current organizational vision;
4. A comparison of the Army's future environment to its current vision, and the conclusion that the two are on a collision course;
5. Alternative visions for the Army's future that could guide its adaptation to possible future environments;
6. What the Army should consider in choosing an alternative vision.

## RESEARCH SCOPE

Listing the potential problems for the Army in the 1990s, although a useful starting point for the research, was not our challenge, nor would it have been a great contribution to the development of solutions. The Army's problems are legion, but useful ways of "collapsing" or "visualizing" them to make them manageable are few. The creative leap for this research was to find ways of collecting and looking at the Army's problems so they could be addressed more comprehensively and consistently. The Navy's Maritime Strategy, regardless of its validity or durability, has provided the Navy with an integrated, institutional

perspective of the nation's security interests and problems, the Navy's time-phased operational challenges, and the rationale for fleet sizing and balance. The Navy could hardly have asked for a concept to carry a heavier burden in its first-order agenda for the 1980s. Concepts of such stature and scope are rare, but are closer to the ideal this research sought than a comprehensive listing and description of the Army's problems in the 1990s would be.

Much of the utility of the research we present here may not be in the particular problems, analyses, or solutions that have drawn the interest or approval of the researchers, but in the illustration of intellectual processes that can lead the Army from problems to solutions if the future differs radically from the past. The effort has been serious, lest the illustrations be "pies in the sky." Thus, though we are willing to defend our assessments of the problems and solutions for the Army in the 1990s, the Army need not agree with these assessments to benefit from our thinking and methods.

## II. A CHANGING WORLD

### ROOTS IN THE PAST

To assess what might lie ahead for the Army—and thus, what Arroyo Center research might better help the Army meet that future—we must begin with some view of what could happen in the world affecting the Army. Because we cannot predict the future world with certainty, any prediction must be an assumption. Such an assumption is better made explicit than left implicit, particularly if others wish to discern our reasoning processes (even if they disagree with our particular assumption).

For this research, the most pertinent parts of the future world are the international and national security environments as they will affect the Army. Projecting these environments into the future necessarily involves looking backward for reference points, trends, mechanisms, and so on that “anchor” the future credibly in the past. Although future events of great consequence with no roots in the past (for example, the arrival of intelligent extraterrestrial beings) are conceivable, such inventions generally cannot provide a basis for institutional planning. We have found looking back over the past 40 years of the international and national security environments useful in making our projection of a changing world 5 or 10 years into the future. We may characterize the past 40 years as having been a period of relative constancy in perceptions of the salient national security problems.

We have not tried to write a scenario of the future. Rather, we have analyzed the past to find interpretations that make sense of the present and thus allow us to project into the future. We have looked more for radical changes in the *perceptions* that influence actions rather than in the streams of events that may influence those perceptions.

Though the world may not change in the way or with the speed we suggest here, we do not make our analysis and prediction casually: The arguments and interpretations are as sincere, serious, and explicit as we know how to make them. We acknowledge that our view of the future, and even the past, may turn out to be incorrect—the world, and therefore predictions based on historical interpretations about the world, are inherently uncertain. But not because we didn't try to make it correct.

## THE AMERICAN MILITARY PLANNING ENVIRONMENT IN THE COLD WAR

Over the past 40 years, the American military planning environment has been remarkably stable in its perceptions of threats and missions, and in the breadth of public support for a large military to contain communism.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the military services' planning problem has mainly been limited to managing the evolution of military technology and expenditures. This post-World War II planning environment, however, appears to be ending; the world is now undergoing a major, rapid transition to new circumstances in which few of the previous perceptions will remain unchallenged or unchanged.

The changes now unfolding are of a scale and significance comparable to those at the end of World War II, when the Axis powers had been defeated and the Allies, even in their victory, began to split, and when the secret marvels of wartime technology—the atomic bomb, jet plane, and space rocket—had just made their dramatic debuts. These events transformed the world forever, and although most observers at the time recognized the change's enormity, few could then see clearly what the new era would be like.

### The Cold War

It took two more years for the grim outlines of the Cold War to emerge and for the United States to shoulder its new international role as leader of the Western world. Most Americans soon perceived the world to be one in which they were

- Mortally engaged in an ideological battle with the Communist world, led by a hostile and expansionist Soviet Union;
- Increasingly vulnerable to a devastating attack upon their homeland—an attack they could only hope to deter, not defeat, by their retaliatory capabilities;
- Obligated to protect vulnerable friends and allies around the world;
- Confronted with the possibility of an armed struggle for the heart of Europe, where they would be at a disadvantage in numbers and position;
- Competing for the fealty of impotent underdeveloped or unaligned nations as pawns in a bipolar Cold War;

<sup>1</sup>Military planning at more detailed levels has, of course, required frequent adjustments because of changes in technology or the specific geographic area in which the general threat took form.

- Relying heavily upon their national advantages in wealth and technology to help solve their problems.

Those perceptions of the nation's security problem have remained remarkably constant over the past 40 years, even though they may have truly applied only to the first decade or so of the postwar era. They persisted, despite changing circumstances, for several reasons:

- By provoking conflict and crisis during the years following World War II, the aggressive behavior of the Communist bloc under Stalin's leadership traumatized the nation and made it persistently wary of communism in all of its faces and deeds.
- Many changes in the American security environment over the past 40 years have been incremental and often ambiguous, favoring the status quo and the momentum of ongoing security programs and postures.<sup>2</sup>
- The resources available to support governmental programs have been sufficient to provide for "both guns and butter" without close public scrutiny of their rationales or the trade-offs between them.
- The Cold War provided a clear argument for peacetime maintenance of the largest and most powerful military forces in American history, an outcome the military services understandably preferred to the lean times they had experienced between the two world wars.

From the outset, the United States' overarching national strategy was not to provoke, attack, or conquer the Communist world. Instead, as political commentator George Kennan stated more than 40 years ago, the United States sought to conduct "a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies" until "either the breakup or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power."<sup>3</sup> This was the strategy that led to General George Marshall's plan to help the Europeans get on their feet economically and thereby be better able to resist the Soviets' relentless pressure, under the banner of international communism, to exploit every political, economic, or military void. Pursuing the containment strategy brought the United States into two

<sup>2</sup>People tend to adhere to their initial perceptions in the face of incrementally conflicting data in more mundane evaluations as well. If an image of one animal changes gradually into that of another, observers will judge the majority of the images to be the animal they first see; similarly, the first adjective in a string tends to dominate the overall perception of the description. See Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1970, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup>George F. Kennan writing as "X" in "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 25, No. 4, July 1947, pp. 550-582.



undeclared wars—first in Korea, then in Vietnam—against expansionist Communist regimes, where the nation, as it had before, spilled blood and treasure on behalf of the freedom of others.

The Cold War to contain communism forced the United States to adopt many wartime measures for its security, even as it was pursuing the peacetime development of its society and economy. The United States maintained the largest peacetime military forces in its history, with a large fraction of them permanently deployed overseas to defend the territorial integrity of allies who shared uneasy borders with Communist states. Large nuclear forces were kept in a continuously high state of readiness to wage war on an unprecedented scale. And the perceived urgencies of the Cold War led to a wartime pace for many weapons development programs—such as those for ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons—that were costly in dollars and, by today's reckoning, in environmental damage.

The Army, too, was transformed by the Cold War. Instead of fulfilling its traditional peacetime role of a professional military cadre ready to mobilize and train the citizen-soldier in times of war, the post-World War II Army evolved into one of professional warriors ready to do battle at any moment, almost anywhere in the world, but most evidently in a battle with the Warsaw Pact for the heart of Europe. And, as with the nation, these Cold War urgencies led the Army into roles, missions, programs, and activities that were costly in lives, dollars, and sometimes even in the Army's traditions and historical values.

### **Winning the Cold War**

Although at times most Americans may have justifiably doubted whether the nation's strategy of containing communism was working or would succeed, some 40 years later it certainly appears to have done so—communism was indeed contained until it began to mellow or show signs of collapsing from its own structural deficiencies. The monolithic image of Moscow-dominated communism has been fractured by major splits within the Eastern bloc—between the People's Republic of China and the Soviets, and between East European nations and the Soviets—leading to accommodation and even cooperation with the Western or free world. Once thought to be on the ascendancy in almost every dimension save human rights and freedoms, the Soviet Union is now seen by most to be in full retreat and reformation, struggling even to keep pace (let alone catch up) with the rest of the world. The Communist economic model, favoring isolationism and central control, has proved itself to be a monumental failure.

This failure is made especially vivid by the success of the industrialized democracies, whose free capitalistic economies have interlaced themselves in an expanding international market and community with extraordinary success and power. The United States' European allies, prostrate and exhausted at the end of World War II, have become strong and independent; two of them are now armed with nuclear weapons; Japan has become an economic superpower; and the West European states are in the process of organizing themselves into another economic superpower. The stability and strength of the West European states, coupled with their independent possession of nuclear arms, has made a struggle for the heart of Europe simultaneously much more portentous and less plausible.

Some analysts, looking back to the circumstances of 40 years ago and the hopes originally embodied in the strategy of containment, are understandably encouraged by current events, which invite speculation that the Cold War has been won after all.

### **Irreversible Changes**

Even though we cannot be sure what is happening or will happen within the Communist giants, we can be confident about several aspects of the dramatic events now unfolding before us. Both the Soviet Union and China are changing (or trying to change) not because they have had a change of heart or conscience, but because their past policies have caused them to fall behind the rest of the world. Our ideas and ideals may not have prevailed in their minds so much as has the increasing comparative evidence of their own failures. To restructure themselves to be economically competitive with the rest of the world, the Communist governments have had to unleash powerful societal forces that have swept some of them from power, and that will in all cases be difficult to "put back in the bottle." The current leaderships in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union may not survive the transformations now under way, and subsequent leaderships may try to restore conditions we associate with the Cold War, but every day brings changes that will make "going back" more difficult, if not impossible.

The United States too has been changing over the past 40 years. Although it remains unequivocally the only military and economic superpower in the world, its *relative* position has declined. Instead of being the majority producer and consumer of world goods, it is now only the largest among many. Its economy, though still the largest, is no longer without serious rivals or concerns for its health. Instead of being the only state with nuclear arms, the United States must now share that awesome stage with an acknowledged half-dozen others,

with perhaps as many more countries now lurking in the wings. The American penchant for technology as a solution for military or civil problems has revealed technology to be a mischievous mistress—one that is increasingly costly, that veils itself in uncertainty, that creates new problems, and that frequently fulfills less than all of its promises.

The United States remains the acknowledged leader of the Western world and the champion of free commerce and human rights, but it no longer behaves as the world's unilateral policeman, as it did in many contingencies during the first decade after World War II. Now, the scope of its military actions is increasingly likely to be predicated upon world and domestic opinions, coordination with allies, and the prospects for quick, decisive effects. The Cold War is increasingly seen as an anachronism to new generations at home and abroad, and the United States is faced with rapidly rising claims on government resources—resources now constrained by law, if not by fiscal responsibility.

These changes, of course, do not result simply from a decline in U.S. military capabilities or will, but more from changes in the world over the past 40 years.

Social and cultural and economic transformations, fed in part by the technology of transportation and communication, prepared the way for much of the change political leaders have been able to effect in recent years.<sup>4</sup>

The netting of the globe with electronic communications and jet transportation has brought conflicts everywhere under public scrutiny from a variety of sources; as a result, governments can no longer ensure exclusive control of information about their economy, society, military, or conduct of war. In the emerging global community, many traditional prerogatives of national sovereignty have been eroded—not by a world government, as some advocated 40 years ago, but by the global availability of information and by transactions across international boundaries.<sup>5</sup> Power in the global community is increasingly perceived to have its roots in information and innovation rather than in military might and natural resources.

In addition, the conflicts in Vietnam and Afghanistan have demonstrated to the world that the *politically usable* military capabilities of even the superpowers are limited. Underdeveloped nations and subnational factions, through the practice of irregular warfare and terrorism, are hardly impotent against more powerful nations. The failure of

<sup>4</sup>Meg Greenfield, "Don't Bet on a 'Sure Thing,'" *Newsweek*, April 3, 1989, p. 78.

<sup>5</sup>Walter B. Wriston, "Technology and Sovereignty," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 67, No. 2, Winter 1988/89, pp. 63-75.

nations, including the Soviet Union and its clients, to convert military, ideological, or territorial aggressiveness into economic or societal success has greatly devalued the concepts of empire and war. The Iran-Iraq, Angolan, and Nicaraguan wars wound down not so much from an exhaustion of resources as from a lack of payoff from large investments. In a world benefiting mostly from netting itself together in information and commerce, waging war to take resources or territory in defiance of that world—at the risk of being isolated from that world—has become an unattractive strategy.

Even as the most developed nations have increasingly concentrated their military power in fewer, more potent systems, a diffusion of highly destructive capabilities into the hands of small nations and even subnational factions has occurred. Although the most powerful nations can credibly threaten the destruction of civilization, the weakest can now credibly threaten any society with terrorism. Relative power is no longer reckoned solely in terms of destructive potentials, but in societal vulnerabilities as well.

All these changes amount to a vastly different world than the one the United States successfully adjusted to 40 years ago. The nation, its allies, its enemies, and the nature of warfare have all been significantly transformed since that time. As it did 40 years ago, the United States will have to adjust to this new era as its outlines emerge more clearly. The next decade will likely be that period of adjustment. The American strategy of containment will probably give way to some new strategy, perhaps one more focused on fostering stability against the worldwide turbulence induced by sharp economic, racial, and religious divisions.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

As with the late 1940s, the contemporary changes are so enormous as to blur our view of what lies ahead. Any number of events—a major war, the use of even one nuclear weapon, an economic collapse—could dominate the course of the future. At this time of great change, trends are more evident than end points; we may not be able to say where or how things will settle out, only the directions in which things appear to be moving.

Some analysts properly caution that current trends, such as the liberalization of the Soviet Union, could reverse sharply. They see much of the current thinking engendered by Soviet rhetoric as wishful, particularly in the West European publics. But the current trends have deeper roots than yesterday's headlines; some go back two or more decades and are only now becoming apparent. However

important it is for the United States to be prepared for sudden reversals in current trends, it is equally important to anticipate these trends' continuation or even their acceleration. The nation should not bet the farm on the current trends, even if they are promising; neither should it simply ignore them because it sees the implications of those trends as adverse for the military services (and especially for the Army).

### **Organized Conflict versus Factional War/Terrorism**

The prospects for organized conflict between nations are declining, even as the likelihood of factional wars and terrorism increases. The pattern of future wars may be more evident in the cities of Beirut, Belfast, and Bethlehem than it has been envisaged on the borders of Germany, Korea, and China. It is not that nations have become peace-loving; rather, as the global commercial and economic community becomes increasingly interconnected, war appears profitable mostly to those who have little or nothing to lose.

This does not by any means imply the end of international conflict *per se*. . . . Conflict between states still [politically evolving] in history, and between those states and those at the end of [their evolving political] history, would still be possible. There would still be a high and perhaps rising level of ethnic and nationalist violence, since those are impulses incompletely played out, even in parts of the post-historical world. Palestinians and Kurds, Sikhs and Tamils, Irish Catholics and Walloons, Armenians and Azeris, will continue to have their unresolved grievances. This implies that terrorism and wars of national liberation will continue to be an important item on the international agenda. *But large-scale conflict must involve large states still caught in the grip of history, and they are what appear to be passing from the scene.*<sup>6</sup>

### **Basis for Security**

Increasingly, the security of nations will be seen to rest more upon economic and social factors and less upon their military capabilities. The threats to national security will come less from political or territorial differences and more from economic, demographic, and religious issues. Therefore, the locus of conflict may be found less at the historical boundaries between countries and more within the infrastructures of their societies, commerce, and communications. This shift has obvious impacts on the military services.

<sup>6</sup>Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *National Interest*, Summer 1989, p. 18 (emphasis added).

### Role of Nuclear Weapons

The role of nuclear weapons in national security will change. Their utility as military instruments, strategic or tactical, will decline as the information technologies provide effective alternatives in precisely and remotely controlled conventional weapons.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, the utility and availability of nuclear weapons as instruments of *political terror* will increase. The most developed nations will have more than enough of them to deter each other, but those nations will not so effectively deter their use by the less-developed nations against each other or, perhaps most likely, by factional groups seeking to terrorize any state. The scenarios of most concern involving nuclear or chemical weapons may no longer be massive exchanges by the superpowers, but their limited use by radical states or factions perceiving that they have more to gain than lose by terrorizing their neighbors or the world.

American nuclear forces and their tasks, both strategic and tactical, will therefore likely shrink. The extension of nuclear deterrence to the protection of allies or against threats to anything less than national survival or sovereignty will become increasingly less necessary or credible. The 50-year dominance of offensive over defensive concepts will weaken. Defenses will not eliminate the threats of mass destruction or invasion by a determined opponent, but many lesser threats, which may not be credibly deterred by threats to use nuclear weapons, will be made more uncertain or more costly by the deployment of defenses against nuclear weapons.

### Role of Conventional Military Capabilities

Compared with their role in the past 40 years, the role of military capabilities in the future will be less in waging war, or even in making credible the threat to wage war, and more in deliberate activities to prevent or limit war and to maintain peace (or at least an acceptable degree of order). The historical war goals of winning or restoring the prewar state will likely be increasingly supplanted by the more pragmatic political goal of stability. The size or power of standing forces will come to count for less, and the quality or character of their presence and use—as a demonstration of national interest or alliance cohesion, for example—will stand for more. Military units will likely be deployed more for constructive tasks—peacekeeping duties, arms control inspections, medical and infrastructural assistance, and so on—and less for combat. The leverage of such constructive support has been

<sup>7</sup>See, for example, Carl H. Builder, *Strategic Conflict without Nuclear Weapons*, The RAND Corporation, R-2980-FF/RC, April 1983.

dramatically illustrated by the Army medical teams dispatched to El Salvador: The mortality rate for governmental troops wounded in combat went from 50 percent to 5 percent—a tenfold reduction.<sup>8</sup> The implication of that change upon the morale of Salvadorian regular soldiers is easy to imagine. Similarly, for many Third World contingencies, the United States may have much more leverage by providing military surveillance or communications infrastructure than by providing combat forces. Even greater leverage may be afforded by various forms of military assistance for the civil infrastructures, especially if they are designed to prevent conflicts from arising in the first place.

### **Size and Basing Mode of the United States' Active Military Forces**

As the nation moves away from the partial wartime footing it has sustained throughout the Cold War, the active military forces will likely shrink—perhaps (to take two examples) even down to eight active Army divisions or ten carrier battle groups by the turn of the century. Conventional forces for major, sustained conflicts will likely be deferred to mobilization rather than maintained in readiness. Ready forces committed into combat will likely be smaller and more mobile, designed for quick insertions as tokens of political commitment or outrage, and limited to tasks that can be accomplished rapidly and decisively and/or with minimum casualties.<sup>9</sup>

The forward basing of major U.S. military forces, an unprecedented feature of the past 40 years, will also likely decline, if not disappear—possibly suddenly. After several decades of American (more than European) alarms as to the growing military threat to Western Europe and calls for greater military efforts from the NATO nations, the prospects in every area—arms control, changing Soviet defense policies, the reorientation of Soviet resources away from the military sector, and changes in Eastern Europe—all point toward threat “evaporation.” Although more optimism may be rooted in Soviet words than is warranted by Soviet deeds, the reality is that public perceptions will decide the support, both domestic and international, for U.S. forward-deployed forces.

The older generations of U.S. allies, which faced invasion 40 years ago and which were grateful for the American military presence, are now being replaced by younger generations that have neither the

<sup>8</sup>Report of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, *Discriminate Deterrence*, January 1988, p. 15.

<sup>9</sup>The recent U.S. intervention in Panama provides a concrete example of such combat.

experience nor the gratitude of their parents. These new generations see the American military presence in their nations not only as an old solution to a problem that has changed, but now as part of the problem of improving relationships with former enemies. These changing attitudes are increasingly evident in both nations where the Army has significant forward-deployed forces: the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the Republic of Korea.

### **Influence of Domestic Problems**

Even if there were no changes in the threat or in U.S. allies, changing winds exist within the United States. Domestic pressures relating to arms control, burden sharing, and budget deficit reductions will all likely squeeze some forward-deployed forces out of Europe and the Far East, perhaps with more than symbolic reductions as a result. More generally, military expenditures will come under continuing pressure as the U.S. economy's health remains a matter of increasing concern because of deficit spending, adverse balances of payments, and growing demands for the devotion of budgetary resources to the social and domestic sectors. Comparisons among national economies implies that the principal cause of American economic woes is U.S. domestic consumption, not military spending.<sup>10</sup> But the costs of modernizing or even maintaining large, sophisticated U.S. forces overseas are no longer invisible to, and therefore unquestioned by, the American public.

The massive economy of the United States is not really propelled or retarded by the relatively small share of GNP [gross national product] now devoted to military outlays. Of course, this does not provide an excuse for exempting defense outlays from the intense scrutiny required of every part of the federal budget in dealing with the serious deficit problem.<sup>11</sup>

The Cold War's premise—that the nation is at war to contain communism—is no longer credible to most. That rhetoric is increasingly co-opted to urge the United States to fight a “war” on poverty or against drugs, or to fight to house its homeless, or to do battle to protect the global environment.

Indeed, an increasing fraction of the tasks assigned to the military will likely be associated with critical domestic problems. Among such tasks might be air (as well as space) defense, border control against illegal

<sup>10</sup>See Samuel P. Huntington, “The U.S.—Decline or Renewal?” *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1988/89, pp. 76-96.

<sup>11</sup>Murray Weidenbaum, *Military Spending and the Myth of Global Overstretch*, Significant Issues series, Vol. 11, No. 4, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., 1989, p. ix.



trafficking in people and commodities, cleanup of governmentally produced environmental hazards, and disaster assistance. Although many military personnel today may shudder at involving the armed services in such domestic problems, we should remember that, for the Army at least, domestic duties make up a long and honored list in its history.

### Conclusions

From this perspective of the changes that could result from current trends, the greatest challenge in military planning will be the *rapidly expanding meaning of national security*—from its previous focus on containing communism to dimensions mostly beyond military power, and from a few well-defined areas of long-standing attention to locations far from those considered “vital national interests.” The advent of a global community, linked in information and commerce for its own well-being, has made the nation's security increasingly inseparable from the world's security, with the United States no longer the world's policeman, but rather the most important and most ardent participant in the global community. And the security and stability of that global community has become associated more with the balance of economic than military might, for military power has become more diffuse and abundant in the world—and therefore less prized—than economic prowess.

The world, of course, is always changing (much as NATO is always in crisis). But we do not think our arguments can be dismissed merely by acknowledging them and then squeezing them into the perspectives that have prevailed over the past 40 years. We believe that the trends of the past decades have become deeply rooted enough that they will soon blossom—and may already be blossoming—in such a way that we must fundamentally change the way we have looked at the world for approximately 40 years or risk seeing very little at all.

### III. ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

The world we imagine coming into focus in the next five or ten years—and persisting for several decades—is a very different place from the postwar world, and it will be different in ways that could well affect the Army. Adapting the Army to that new world is a problem that will—and should—preoccupy the Army leadership. We have adopted an approach to the problem we imagine someone responsible for the well-being of any large organization might take:

1. First, we determine the organization's current identity and purpose.
2. Next, we see if that current sense of organizational identity and purpose—that organizational vision—will serve the organization well in its likely future environment.
3. Finally, we identify and choose among new and alternative senses of identity and purpose for the organization if its current outlook is more likely to harm than help it in the future.

Figure 1 illustrates these steps structurally. We undertake the first step in the next section, the second step in Sec. V, and the final step in Secs. VI and VII. Along the way, we make several specific assumptions and consequently pursue some intellectual pathways more extensively than others. We believe, however, that this overall structure is useful for looking at the Army's future from a top-down perspective, regardless of whether readers agree with each of our specific conclusions.

#### THE VALUE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL VISION APPROACH

The leader of a large organization could well approach its problems from some other direction—by trying, for example, to identify promising technological areas and encourage their development if they seem likely to be relevant in the future, or by examining how the organization has responded to stress in the past and trying to avoid any mistakes made before. We believe, however, that examining an organization's essential sense of identity and purpose—what we call its organizational vision—is a profitable line of inquiry to pursue with respect to the Army and its likely future environment. Moreover, an

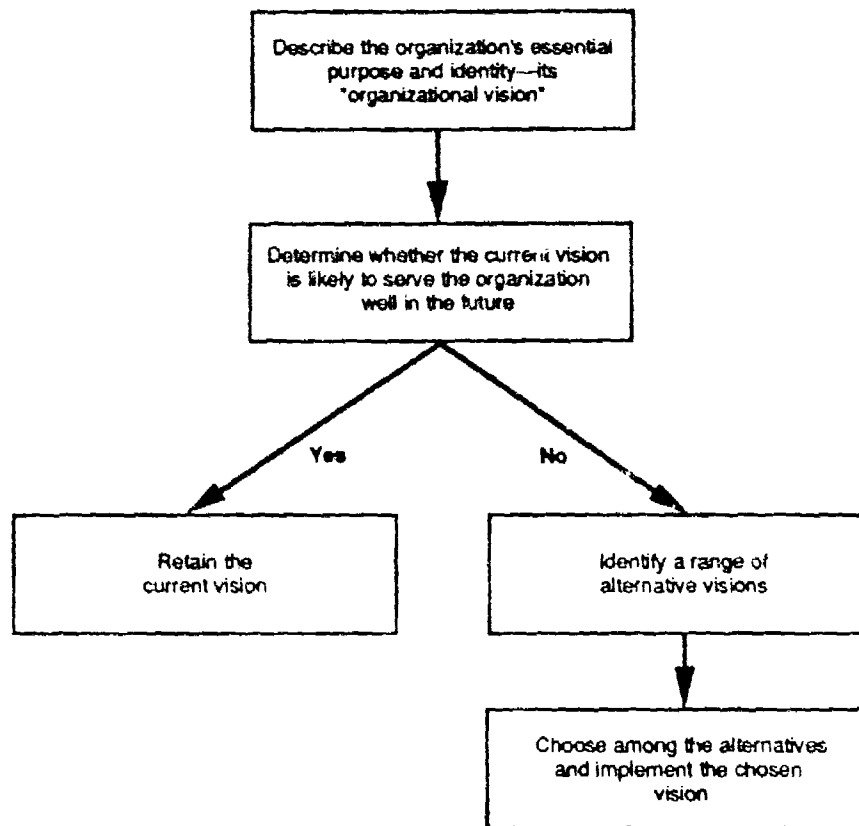


Fig. 1—Using organizational vision to cope with a changing world

emphasis on organizational vision is truly a top-down approach: It depends not upon the myriad evaluations of technological specialists or the conclusions of institutional historians, but rather upon the reasoned inferences of someone who attempts to examine an organization as a whole and hopes to steer the whole institution in a particular direction.

Some readers may doubt that any concept as abstract as a "sense of identity and purpose" can offer concrete guidance to large organizations operating in the real world, particularly to an organization with the hard-nosed objectives of an army. In this report's appendix, we

have attempted to show with concrete examples that successful organizations (both public and private, and both military and nonmilitary) have definite organizational visions of varying utility, and to demonstrate how such visions can help or harm the organizations that hold them. In the main body of the report, we simply assume that large organizations cannot prosper long without a clear sense of identity and purpose, even in a relatively stable environment (let alone in one that is rapidly changing). An organizational vision, in contrast, allows coordination without excessive centralization: If shared, a sense of identity and purpose can reliably guide members of an organization without the need to consult higher levels of authority. A far-flung organization can rely upon the initiative and fresh information of personnel in the lower ranks if it can instill them with a unified sense of identity and purpose that prevents chaos.<sup>1</sup>

### ATTRIBUTES OF AN ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

Not just any shared vision will do, however. We discuss briefly here the four characteristics of organizational vision that we find crucial (and that we discuss at greater length in the appendix):

- Inspiration;
- Relevance and realism;
- Clarity and distinctiveness;
- Pervasiveness and stability.

First, a vision must be inspirational: The sense of identity and purpose provided by the vision must be inherently attractive to people the organization wishes to enlist as its converts or benefactors. Such a vision draws suitable personnel to the organization and inspires them to excellence after they have joined. In addition, a suitably inspirational organizational vision presents a positive image to those outside the organization (such as shareholders or members of a congressional subcommittee) who determine what external resources (such as capital or budgetary appropriations) the organization will have available. A vision that many inside or outside the organization see as degrading or as diminishing the organization's worth will not do, but a vision may

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<sup>1</sup>The Communist economic model, with its extreme centralization, is an example of the pitfalls of tightly controlled decisionmaking; that its flaws have become glaring in an age when technologies and markets arise and disappear with dizzying rapidity is no coincidence. In the appendix, we explore how the U.S. Army's *Field Manual 100-5* sets forth an opposite model—one involving a clear vision of operations but extensive decentralization in the actual execution—with respect to the rapidly changing environment of the battlefield.

be effective if it simply changes the perceived contribution of the organization from one thing to another.

Second, an organizational vision must be relevant and realistic with respect to the challenges and opportunities confronting the organization. A vision that does not help to solve the problems members of an organization face each day will be discarded as sloganeering. A vision that clearly cannot be fulfilled or that, if fulfilled, cannot contribute in the prevailing circumstances will also ultimately fail to serve the organization. Members of the organization will become frustrated, the organization will become less and less successful, people outside the organization will become less and less willing to provide it with resources, and members of the organization will become even more frustrated as they struggle not only with an unhelpful vision but with fewer resources. Selecting a vision appropriate to (or slightly ahead of) its time is, in contrast, a hallmark of great leadership.

Third, a vision must be clear and distinctive in its discrimination of the organization's unique identity and purpose. If the sense of identity and purpose provided by an organizational vision does not set the organization apart from others—from its competitors and even from its companions—then no reference frame exists for the organization's decisions. Every blur of distinction in identity and purpose invites mimicry, and hence, a loss of the opportunity for leadership.

Fourth, a vision must be pervasive and stable, widely shared and understood inside (and, ideally, even outside) the organization. If the vision is not known or understood, it cannot be the basis for decisions and actions. An inspiring and relevant vision that exists only in the mind of the organization's leader may be useful under ideal conditions, but the power of an organizational vision lies in its ability to serve the organization under less-than-ideal conditions, particularly in those times of stress when an organization must depend on all its members to detect and implement change. At the same time, a vision that changes each month with the mood of an organization's top leader will not be able to soak through the ranks of an organization to guide the myriad of decisions made by personnel far from the executive suite or the Pentagon's outer ring.

All four of these attributes are essential. We can imagine circumstances in which all but one of these attributes would be satisfied, and yet the vision would not be suitable. We cannot imagine any suitable vision in which one of these attributes could be missing. Taken together, they also imply that an organization sometimes faces a very important decision: whether to change its organizational vision. If an organization's top leadership attempts to change its vision too freely, that vision will be too unstable to serve as a pervasive and reliable

guide for action. If top leaders wait too long to change an organization's vision in a changing environment, that vision becomes irrelevant—and so may the organization. These are the essential ingredients we have looked for—and the essential decision we have looked at—as we have examined current and alternative Army visions.

## IV. THE ARMY'S CURRENT VISION

### AN EXPLICIT VISION?

Does the United States Army have an organizational vision? One place to look might be the public statements of top Army leaders. Does the Army derive its distinctive sense of identity and purpose as the "*strategic force* that provides our nation with well-led, well-trained forces ready to be a decisive element in conflict at any level wherever U.S. interests are threatened . . . because they provide essential and irreplaceable capabilities before and after the outbreak of hostilities"?<sup>1</sup> This goal, though laudable, is not sufficiently distinctive to serve as an organizational vision for the Army: To "be a decisive element in conflict at any level wherever U.S. interests are threatened" tells little about why the Army is different from other U.S. military services. Even if *strategic force* is replaced with *strategic land (or ground) force*, the statement fails to distinguish the Army from the Marines. Such a formulation is also insufficiently clear: It says little about how the Army expects to make tough choices about how to fight, with what resources, with what amount of warning, and so forth.

An alternative view of the Army as simply the "land-power" force may, as one of the authors has argued elsewhere, be not only unclear but also irrelevant and unwise. The Army has not historically defined itself in terms of its medium of combat—that is, as the land-power force, as opposed to the sea-power force (Navy) or the air-power force (Air Force)—and *cannot* wisely do so in light of the relative tactical immobility of ground forces and the intimate interdependence between terrain and military strategy.<sup>2</sup>

Other explicit views exist that might be taken as a statement of the Army's identity and purpose. One such view has been stated by the Army itself:

[T]he Army ethic must strive to set the institution of the Army and its purpose in proper context—that of service to the larger institution of the nation, and fully responsive to the needs of its people.<sup>3</sup>

A respected historian has a similar view:

<sup>1</sup>General Carl E. Vuono, "Our 'Clearest, Most Valuable Symbol of Resolve,'" *Army*, October 1988 ("Green Book" issue), pp. 22-23 (emphasis in original).

<sup>2</sup>Carl H. Builder, *The Army in the Strategic Planning Process: Who Shall Bell the Cat?* The RAND Corporation, R-3513-A, April 1987, pp. 71-73.

<sup>3</sup>The U.S. Army, *Field Manual FM-100-1*, August 14, 1981, p. 24.

Traditionally, the American Army has considered itself the neutral instrument of state policy. It exists to carry out the government's orders and when ordered into action does not ask "Why?" or "What for?"<sup>4</sup>

Though all these views have much validity, none will suffice as a statement of an organizational vision for the U.S. Army. None captures a clear, distinctive, widely shared sense of the Army's identity and purpose in a way that can guide the daily decisionmaking of the Army's soldiers.

### AN IMPLICIT ORGANIZATIONAL VISION FOR THE ARMY

We think the Army does have an organizational vision, though it is an implicit one. We believe that the Army's thoughts and actions reflect a single, dominant, widely shared sense of identity and purpose: *the instantly ready armored defender of central Europe*. Despite the claim that the Army's goal is to be prepared for "conflict at any level wherever U.S. interests are threatened," and despite the Army's willingness to fight wherever the nation asks it to, the Army's focus on high-intensity conflict in central Europe is incontestable. Approximately one-fourth of the Army has both its equipment and its personnel forward deployed in central Europe; another fourth has or is planned to have a full set of its equipment stockpiled there; and almost another fourth beyond these units are earmarked for the single theater of Europe. The only other forward deployment of more than a brigade is the single, if oversized, division in South Korea, and no prepositioned overseas material configured in unit sets (POMCUS) "deployments" outside Europe have been undertaken. Even the flanks of Europe are left to the Marines and the Italians. And the vast majority of the units in, or earmarked for, central Europe are armored or mechanized-infantry divisions designed for high-intensity conflict against the Warsaw Pact's similar forces.

The Army's vision of itself as the *armored* defender of central Europe is almost as obvious: Of the 18 active divisions, 10 are dominated by battalions of tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, or armored personnel carriers, as are *all* of the forward-deployed units. Consistent with this vision, the Army has boasted most proudly of the performance of its M1 tank, and the relatively small number of light units

<sup>4</sup>Barbara W. Tuchman, "Human Nature Is Responsible," in David L. Bender (ed.), *The American Military: Opposing Viewpoints*, Greenhaven Press, St. Paul, Minn., 1983, p. 74.



have historically been in constant danger of being unfunded or even reconverted to heavy units.<sup>5</sup>

The Army also clearly strives to be the *instantly ready* armored defender of central Europe. It keeps hundreds of thousands of soldiers deployed forward in Europe, ready both geographically and operationally to fight—in central Europe at least—on very short notice. Even for forces not earmarked for central Europe, the Army aims to have them highly trained and ready today rather than prepared to serve as the cadre for a massive, long-haul buildup of forces. Citizen-soldiers would not fight the Army's first battle if the next war came tomorrow.

The current Army has made one other choice—a choice so pervasive and so successfully ingrained that it requires the perspective of pre-World War II history to see that there is even a choice to be made: The Army has focused upon its combat power on the battlefield rather than on its ability to provide general military services to the nation. By *combat power*, we mean the direct application of military force by the Army on a battlefield against an opponent. The notion of *general military service*, in contrast, includes within its ambit a variety of tasks sensibly performed by men and women skilled in military tasks. For example, the *indirect* provision of combat power—by training or advising members of foreign armies, or by providing them with intelligence or with medical support—is a component of general military service; so is the execution of military activities not linked to a traditional battlefield, such as guarding borders or building roads under dangerous conditions. General military service includes among its goals the direct provision of combat power, but those who would identify themselves as the nation's general military servants do not consider the direct provision of combat power to be their *only* mission.

More general military services have long shared the Army's stage with the direct provision of combat power. The Army met the British in the War of 1812, but it also provided Lewis and Clark to explore the United States' western regions. The Army fought the Mexican War and the Civil War, but it also patrolled (and expanded) the nation's frontiers against the American Indian and built canals and dams to link and protect the country's scattered cities. The Army charged up San Juan Hill in a blaze of glory, but it also undertook a sustained, unglamorous pacification of the Philippines. The Army fought World

<sup>5</sup>Not long ago, for example, the Army was planning to convert the 9th Infantry (Motorized) Division—a proving ground for high-technology weapons that would still allow their users to constitute a light, highly mobile division—back into a traditional, heavy, mechanized-infantry division. The Army now plans simply to cut the unit out of its force structure.

War I, but it also ran the camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps and dispersed the camps of the Pensioners' Army. In fact, general military service has been the Army's bread and butter throughout most of its history. The Army probably considered large-scale combat to be the butter, but it nonetheless willingly undertook a variety of tasks requiring the services of those skilled in the military arts. That broad range of tasks, pursued over a lifetime of military service, was what a soldier's duties—and his sense of duty—were all about. Today, in contrast, the duty of the soldier is to prepare himself to fight (outnumbered) and win (the first battle), particularly against the Soviets in central Europe.

### CHOICES IN THE ARMY'S ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

We can see, then, that the Army does have a dominant organizational vision to guide it, even if that vision is—unfortunately, we think—more implicit than explicit.<sup>6</sup> The Army has taken a host of measures to effect this vision, and in the process has made a number of choices along the way: to base a large portion of its forces forward in Europe, to make those forward-deployed forces units heavy in armor, to focus on the readiness of its active-duty forces, and to concentrate on combat power.

Some analysts may argue that the Army has had no choice but to focus on Europe and forward deployments—that these choices were forced upon the Army by the national leaderships of the United States and its allies—and that the Army's other choices followed inevitably. We appreciate that there were reasons to justify each attribute of the Army's current vision. In the Cold War environment, the Army's most relevant threat was the huge Soviet army, and to expect society to contribute the resources necessary to discourage tens of thousands of Soviet tanks from streaming across the central European plain was realistic. The Army's current vision has allowed it to make coherently several decisions about how to allocate its resources, and has also allowed it to inspire hundreds of thousands of Americans to fight in—and, lately, to join voluntarily—the Army's ranks. The Army's focus on central Europe distinguishes the Army's vision from the geographical agnosticism of the Navy, Air Force, and Marines. But some four

<sup>6</sup>An explicit vision would increase the ease with which the vision could be effected, just as setting forth any standard expressly makes following it easier for others. The risk of such forthrightness is that those inside the Army but outside its mainstream will find the vision discouraging, or that those outside the Army might find the Army's vision increasingly irrelevant.

decades after the Cold War started, it is now the Army—not the national leaderships of the United States and its allies—that argues most forcefully for its current focus and that resists most tenaciously any change.

We also recognize that many subsidiary or subordinate visions now reside and survive within the Army. Thus, defining the Army's sense of identity and purpose as the instantly ready armored defender of central Europe does not deny room in the Army for many units and capabilities with other identities and purposes. But these coexisting visions are not the dominant vision. They do not describe where the heart of the Army is to be found, nor how it will make its hard choices.

## V. THE ARMY AND THE FUTURE

The Army's current vision puts it on a collision course with the onrushing future we described in Sec. II:

- The Army seeks to be instantly ready, but high day-to-day readiness is expensive and difficult to justify: Budgetary pressures are high, memories of large-scale U.S. involvement in combat are some two decades old, and the prospects of such involvement in the future are seen as even less likely than they were in the past.
- The Army's heavy armored forces are both expensive and tailored to high-intensity warfare in central Europe, but their costs are increasingly difficult to justify, especially at a time when the high-intensity threat from the Soviet Union appears to be diminishing.
- The forward deployments of U.S. forces are the linchpin of the current Army vision, but public pressures to pull that pin are growing in both the host nations and the United States alike.
- The Army has focused on combat power at a time when the United States—and indeed, even the Defense Department—is hesitant to commit its troops to combat and when the nation perceives a host of new or unconventional threats to its security, such as terrorism, drugs, illegal immigration, economic decline, infrastructural decay, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), and environmental damage.

When two objects are on a collision course, four things can happen: (1) one object may alter its course and avoid the collision; (2) the other object may alter its course; (3) both objects may alter their courses; or (4) the two objects can collide. The same is true of the Army and the future. The world may "swerve" back to its original course—one in which the Army's current vision would again be relevant and realistic. Alternatively, the Army may change its course, which in our view requires it to adopt an alternative organizational vision. Or the world may swerve back to its original course and the Army may change to some new course. Finally, the world and the Army may both continue along their current paths—and collide.

We turn now to examine three of these possibilities: that the Army and the world will collide, that the Army will change its course to avoid a collision, and that the world will swerve back to its old course and

allow the Army to retain its current organizational vision with only minor difficulties. The remaining possibility—that both the world and the Army will change their current courses—strikes us as unlikely and we do not examine it here: Given the Army's incentives to retain its current organizational vision, we do not think the Army will change its vision if it sees the world swerving back to its Cold War course.

### **COLLISION BETWEEN THE ARMY'S ORGANIZATIONAL VISION AND THE WORLD**

If the Army retains its current organizational vision, its collision with the future will likely occur regardless of what happens at Mikhail Gorbachev's next press conference—or even at the press conferences of his successor, whomever that person may be and whenever the succession may occur. The choices implied by the Army's current vision will set the Army swimming upstream against so many currents—in domestic budgets, arms control, the Soviet threat (apart from arms control), host-nation politics, international economics—that we think the Army's current vision and its future will collide not just in one possible future world, but in most conceivable futures.

The collision will be political, not physical, and will happen in the hearing rooms of Congress and the living rooms of polled Americans before it affects the Army's forces where they are deployed. Actors outside the Army—the president, Congress, and the masses of people they represent—possess the ability to constrain the Army's organizational vision quite drastically, if they so choose. As the Army so frequently and sincerely states, it is at bottom an instrument of the American government and its people. If those people firmly decide that the Army is spending tens of billions of dollars to place outmoded forces on the soil of ungrateful nations to defend against a nonexistent threat, the Army had better watch out—especially if those same people see other military threats of a more pressing nature, or perceive that a host of nonmilitary needs are crying out for scarce governmental funds.

In fact, an Army that resists powerful trends along these lines may well only make things worse for itself. If the Army buttons up against what it takes to be its foes and refuses to consider alternatives to its current vision, it may surrender much of its ability to see and shape the externally imposed changes that will come to pass. Early in the dynamic between an external environment forcing change upon the Army and an Army bent on preserving the status quo, the Army might not hear because it is busy with more immediate—and, to the Army's way of thinking, more important—matters. Later in that dynamic, the

Army might be seen as a reluctant participant brought to the fray only by a sense of self-preservation, and hence its pleas will be treated with suspicion.

A hypothetical example may help. Suppose the Army were to stick to a purely reactive course throughout a decade in which the United States and the Soviet Union completed and implemented treaties that reduced their nuclear and conventional arsenals to half their current size, and in which the world economy suffered a serious recession—an unlikely, but not impossible, scenario. Under such conditions, a persistently recalcitrant Army could give itself a reputation as an obstructionist institution of little relevance to a perceived future, and also as a drain on precious economic resources. The Army could then suffer especially deep and rapid budget cuts, with the consequent threat to its organizational viability, let alone its vision. In such an environment, the Army would not merely be paring its current allocation of resources here and there in its budget. Rather, the Army would be confronted with chain-saw surgery performed by others, or very reluctantly self-performed. We can imagine having to reduce the Army to an active end strength of only 200,000 men, or living on a budget of \$25 billion. Time for thoughtful triage might not even exist. The decisions will be no easier if (as seems likely) the Army's most talented individuals become demoralized along the way and depart for less drab pastures.<sup>1</sup>

Can such a thing happen? It has happened before—with the Army's nadir between the two world wars, or when the Army was relegated to the role of underfunded Indian fighter during the late 19th century. This scenario need not be the most likely outcome for it to be sufficiently chilling for the Army to engage in some consideration of what its response would be in such a situation.

How quickly could such a thing happen? If reductions of a division or two in U.S. forward-deployed forces occurred in connection with the conventional arms talks in Europe, and if Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were to continue liberalizing their economies and politics, the Army might need answers to crucial questions about its future within the next few years—especially if the global economy takes a downturn. Again, such a scenario need not develop overnight to be chilling enough for the Army to begin now to confront those questions.

A violent collision between the military services generally and their external environment might well harm the Army more than its sister services. The Air Force and Navy have defined themselves by their media (air and sea) and global missions, and the Marines have long

<sup>1</sup>For a general discussion of when (and which) individuals will leave an organization or will instead remain to attempt to improve the institution, see Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*, pp. 44–54, 79–96.

touted themselves as the kind of quick-insertion ground force that may appear increasingly relevant in the future. In contrast, the Army has increasingly defined itself over the past 40 years through its concept of a battlefield and the forward deployments of its forces, particularly of those deployed in the FRG. If sizable reductions in U.S. military budgets or forward-deployed forces occur, the Army's posture may be less resilient than those of its sister services. A few aircraft carriers or wings of aircraft—even those that are forward deployed—can be cut without changing the Navy's or the Air Force's current visions of themselves or their concepts of operations, but a few divisions cut from the Army's forward-deployed forces could easily undercut the rationale that now sustains the Army's organizational vision.

In addition, the Army's historical bond to the American people gives it more to lose if it strains that bond by persisting with a vision of itself incompatible with that public's views.

Although each of our armed services is unique and different, the U.S. Army holds a special position of significance and trust. Its ranks come from the people, the country's roots, and it is closest to the people.<sup>2</sup>

The Army needs the largest quantity of manpower, and thus needs the most people. In addition, the Army is a more egalitarian and generalist service than the aristocratic Navy, the technological Air Force, or the elite Marines; the Army therefore depends upon the broadest range of Americans. Furthermore, when war comes, it has traditionally been the Army that suffers the bulk of the casualties; thus, the Army is likely to have to offer the most complete accounting of its reasons for acting as it did. An institution so dependent on, and accountable to, the American people is likely to suffer more than its sister services if its sense of identity and purpose differs from one acceptable to most U.S. citizens.

### THE WORLD SWERVES BACK

A collision between an Army that continues to adhere to its current organizational vision and the Army's future environment is one possible outcome. Also possible (though less likely, we think) is an outcome in which the world will swerve back to a state similar to the one that existed in the 1950s. In such a future world, the Army's current organizational vision would continue to be relevant; presumably the

<sup>2</sup>Bruce Palmer, Jr., *The 25-Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1984, p. 209.

American public would be willing to continue devoting resources to make that vision realistic as well.

### How the World Might Swerve

Assertions that the world is not moving toward a new set of fundamental perceptions about domestic and international security are becoming more muted and more complex but are still made. We can summarize the main lines of these cautionary arguments, with some overlappings, as follows:

- The changes in the Communist world remain more rhetorical than substantive, especially in the sphere of Soviet military affairs.
- The Soviets are only "playing possum," seeking a "breather" to give them time to invigorate their economy and/or ideology before renewing and redoubling their efforts to defeat the West.
- Any substantive changes by the Soviets could be reversed quickly or lead to dangerous instabilities.
- The changes, real or imagined, do not alter the fundamental, historical dangers posed by the East to the West.
- The military strength of the United States is largely responsible for the Soviet Union's current transformation. We should not kill the goose that has laid this golden egg, especially since we cannot rebuild U.S. military power as quickly as the authoritarian Soviet Union could rebuild its war machine.
- Our forward-deployed forces in Europe are there—and should stay there—because nowhere else in the world are the stakes higher for the West or are Western interests more immediately threatened by so much opposing military force. (The additional argument that bringing home the forward-deployed forces will not save money because of the need to build additional facilities at home, though true enough, has died in the throat. To voice it would raise an even more distressing question: Do the forces need to be retained after they have been brought home?)
- Current American economic difficulties may be an important challenge to the nation but cannot be allowed to thwart an even more fundamental goal: preserving the country's national security.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Note that this argument equates national security with military capabilities and does not explicitly recognize the balancing of military, economic, political, and social aspects in pursuit of national security.



Obviously, some of these concerns cannot be overcome even if the Cold War is unanimously agreed to have been won; they are not rooted in the existence of the Cold War, but rather in perceptions of its causes or consequences. Nevertheless, all of them can be resolved into a skepticism about the permanence of the current transformations in the Communist nations and the admonition that in an uncertain world, "keeping our guard up and our powder dry" is the wisest course.

In justifying its current organizational vision, the Army can look not only to the uncertainties of the future, but also to the certainties of the past. Shifts in the focus of the *nation* since the close of World War II have not compelled the Army to shift its focus from the instantly ready armored defense of Europe. The nation fought a war in Korea, but the Army that emerged from the resulting armistice was focused on Europe and deployed its newly plentiful resources accordingly. The nation's political leadership—as well as the Air Force and Navy—raced to integrate nuclear weapons into U.S. forces in the 1950s, but the Army abandoned the difficult questions of how actually to fight a nuclear war after a relatively brief flirtation with the Pentomic division. *Counterinsurgency* was the watchword of the early 1960s, but the Army snubbed the special forces and continued to focus on large-unit armored actions and on central Europe. Indeed, the Army fought the Vietnam War with units trained and equipped for a big war in central Europe (though its attempts to deploy armor in Vietnam were obviously limited).<sup>4</sup> And the Army has seen different budgetary environments in the years since Vietnam, but "hollow" or flush, the Army has seen its identity and purpose as the instantly ready armored defender of central Europe. Through 40 years of peace and war, from the Sherman to the Abrams, and from trip wires to deep fires, the Army's vision of itself has persisted. Many people will ask, and some not so cynically, "Why should the Army change now?"

Although it seldom surfaces explicitly, another related concern exists about concluding that the world is leaving the Cold War era: Any reduction of the threat posed by communism could adversely affect the current justifications for many, if not most, national security and military programs. That fear has been expressed starkly for the Navy:

The institutional trauma in store for our naval service is awesome. In the absence of competition from the Soviets, our high-tech, high-

<sup>4</sup>Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Md., 1986.

value, globally deployed fleets would represent massive and costly overkill.<sup>5</sup>

The Navy's current sense of identity and purpose has allowed it to garner and deploy the resources necessary to construct those "high-tech, high-value, globally deployed fleets." Similarly, the Army's current organizational vision has been the basis for the largest, longest-standing peacetime Army in the nation's history; it has been the basis for a concept of warfare that has made the Army central and strategic<sup>6</sup>; and it has been almost the sole basis for the heavily armored and mechanized forces the Army has preferred ever since its victories in Europe more than 40 years ago. If the Army's special relationship with the instantly ready armored defense of Europe is threatened, the whole and heart of the Army is threatened.

Therefore, the Army cannot easily contemplate the disaster that may befall it, or even contemplate the prudent actions to be taken to prevent the disaster, without being drawn toward the abyss. A strong fear exists that if personnel inside the Army make plans to hedge against that unattractive future, people outside the Army may trumpet those plans as implicit acknowledgments by the Army of the feasibility—or even the inevitability—of such a future. Some analysts fear that assertions by the Army that such plans merely reflect prudence could be to no avail. In addition, creating and implementing a new organizational vision for the Army would in many cases pose a threat to powerful interests within the Army—the armor branch, for example, or the combat branches as a whole, or even the active-duty Army as a whole—and might thereby face daunting obstacles on the road to Army-wide adoption.

To contemplate alternative concepts of the Army, then, is to undermine the current concept now unifying the Army and serving as the wellspring for its decisionmaking. Large organizations have difficulty changing even when they wish to change. The Army currently faces powerful incentives not to want to change and thus faces powerful incentives to want to believe that the world will swerve back and allow the Army to retain its current organizational vision. What we see as a likely future for the Army is not something the current Army can welcome; it sees these futures as a retreat, a retrenchment to something less than the Army has long been or aspired to be. And because these unattractive futures are not yet absolutely foreordained, the Army is

<sup>5</sup>Captain Gerald G. O'Rourke, "Our Peaceful Navy," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 115, No. 4, April 1989, p. 80.

<sup>6</sup>General Carl E. Vuono, "The United States Army Is a Strategic Force," *Armed Forces Journal International*, February 1989, pp. 60-64.

naturally more inclined to devote its energies to avoiding these futures than to accommodating them.<sup>7</sup>

### How the Army Should Make Its Choices If the World Swerves

What should the Army do if it decides to bet its future on the hope that before a collision between the Army's current vision and its environment occurs, the world will swerve back to being one in which the United States considers its central security problem to be deterring a Soviet nuclear strike against the United States and, more important for the Army, deterring a Soviet-led flood of tanks from streaming across central Europe?<sup>8</sup> The Army can still expect that it will need to make some difficult choices, and it can make those choices more effectively and efficiently by turning to its organizational vision for guidance.

First, of course, the Army can benefit from making its current vision explicit, at least within the Army. An explicit vision will make coordination easier to achieve simply because Army personnel will have a clearer idea of what they are about, or will understand that idea sooner. Although the current vision is evident in the Army's behavior, clearly not everyone in the Army has received or accepted that vision. Where the Army waffles or blurs that vision to accommodate different interests within the Army, it confuses believers and dissenters alike. Making the vision explicit may offend some portions of the Army, but an Army in an incrementally different world should be able to accommodate its diverse but noncentral interests with judicious budgetary allocations and a sincere promise of more when better times arrive.

More generally, an organizational vision with the four characteristics we described in Sec. III can always assist in coordinating a large organization without requiring excessive centralization, and the Army's current vision will continue to fulfill these criteria if the world swerves back to its Cold War course before it collides with the Army's current vision. In an environment in which the Army faces nothing more

<sup>7</sup>At least one report indicates that the Army is actively considering "reshaping itself" (Michael R. Gordon with Bernard E. Trainor, "Army Facing Cuts, Reported Seeking to Reshape Itself," *New York Times*, December 12, 1989, p. 1). Even if this report is accurate, one must be careful when evaluating sweeping restructurings of large organizations not to take the word for the deed. See fn. 12 below.

<sup>8</sup>In the short term, and conceivably in the long term, such an offensive might jump off from a line near what was once called the Iron Curtain. In the medium term, Soviet withdrawals from East European nations may force any such offensive to begin on the Soviet border. Some analysts do not consider this an insurmountable disadvantage. See Alexander M. Haig, Jr., "Unjustified Euphoria," *Washington Post*, Feb. 11, 1990 ("[A]nyone who thinks that a determined would-be aggressor in Europe will be put off by knowing that he must deal with Polish or Czech or Hungarian forces before he can launch an assault needs a refresher course in the 20th century").

disastrous than incrementally declining budgetary resources or incremental changes in its freedom of action with respect to its missions, systems, and deployments, the Army can therefore benefit from measuring and making its hard choices in accordance with its current organizational vision. In the budgetary realm, the Army's current vision counsels strenuous efforts to keep its heavy forces in Europe at a high level of readiness. If force-structure changes are necessary, the Army should first cut its light, rather than heavy, units, and should cut its heavy units based in the continental United States (CONUS) before it cuts heavy units based in Europe. Research and development (R&D) should also be directed toward protecting avenues of technological innovation most likely to improve heavy units' ability to remain powerful and ready, such as the future family of armored vehicles, reactive or active armor designs, or more easily maintained tank engines.

The Army can take similarly useful guidance from its current organizational vision when the Army sets priorities among its efforts to influence nonbudgetary, external decisions about its missions and deployments. If Congress ponders a scheme to emphasize that the Army is responsible for the defense of Europe and the Marines are responsible for power-projection or other rapid-deployment missions outside Europe, then, under its current organizational vision, the Army should support such a move. If Congress or arms control negotiators seek to withdraw a significant proportion of the Army's forward-deployed forces from Europe or attempt to reduce disproportionately the heavy armaments of those units remaining, the Army should be deeply concerned.<sup>9</sup>

Much of the Army's behavior to date is consistent with these choices, as we would expect if we are correct in our assertion that the Army is implicitly guided by an organizational vision of itself as the instantly ready armored defender of Europe. The purpose of making that vision explicit, and of using it as a guide to future decisions, would be to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Army decisions on issues of the type it has wrestled with for decades—in other words, to make a marginal improvement in the Army's decisionmaking in what the Army bets will be a marginally different world.

<sup>9</sup>The agreement in principle between the superpowers to reduce U.S. and Soviet troop levels in Europe to 195,000 each probably, but not necessarily, qualifies as an item worthy of deep concern. We discuss below the need for the Army to be able to determine more concretely when its current organizational vision is threatened.

## THE ARMY CHANGES COURSE

If the world does not swerve back to its Cold War course, the Army can avoid a collision only if it changes its own course. One could argue that the Army has in fact already made sufficient adaptations to the trends that will become dominant in a fundamentally altered world—that is, that the Army has already changed its course enough to avoid a collision. The Army has a few light divisions to meet threats outside Europe, has already increased its reliance on the reserves, has tried to minimize its reliance on nuclear weapons, and has a corps of engineers (as well as medical and signal corps) to take advantage of opportunities for general military service. The key to understanding the Army is understanding its organizational vision, however, and these adaptations are peripheral in the Army's current vision. Therefore, we believe that under the budgetary stress that will occur if the Army's current vision collides with its future, the Army will abandon these adaptations first, not last. We draw support for our conclusion from the Army's recent decision to cut out of its force structure the 9th Infantry (Motorized) Division, an experimental high-technology light division. An Army that was willing to move to new ground would not surrender without a fight its only outpost in the vicinity of one of its most likely new camps.

Given the perspective in our research, we believe the way for an organization to change course is for it to change its organizational vision—to adopt a new sense of identity and purpose. For the Army to take this path, it will need to lift its head from the many concerns of the moment and conclude that long-standing trends require it to create a new organizational vision.

We discuss in Sec. VI and VII one way to go about choosing such a vision, but *any* vision the Army chooses must be widely shared. The Army must therefore disseminate its chosen vision both inside and outside itself and ensure that, once decided upon, the vision remains sufficiently stable to percolate through the organization and allow its widely scattered components to coordinate their actions. The top leadership of the Army must also, by its example, convince others in the Army that this new vision in fact provides the proper guidelines to use in making decisions.

If the Army enters the political fray early—and often—with a carefully considered alternative to the visions of the Army gleaming in the eyes of outsiders, it will be much more likely to receive a fair hearing on its views and to minimize congressional micromanagement of the

transition. In most imaginable circumstances, in fact, the Army will likely be shown great deference if its proposed plan of action is even roughly consonant with the perceptions of those outside the Army. The Army—if it picks the appropriate new vision—should thereby be able to avoid a disastrous collision with its external environment. The resulting Army will likely be substantially different from the current Army and, from the Army's current perspective, may in many ways be a less attractive Army. That said, the time may come when the Army's current special relationship with the instantly ready armored defense of central Europe is clearly and irrevocably lost, and alternatives that do not seem attractive now may then take on new appearances.

### THE THREE PATHS TAKEN TOGETHER

Which of the three possibilities we have discussed above will actually come to pass is very difficult to say. The world's course will be determined by a wide variety of actors—politicians, the Army's sister services, publics, terrorists, bankers, "drug czars"—in addition to those within the U.S. Army, and we would be foolish to think we can predict with certainty the outcome of the Army's future. We think the Army would be equally foolish, however, to put all its bets on a belief that the world's course will swerve before it collides with the Army's current organizational vision. The chances that the world will *not* swerve are great—not 100 percent certain, but significant.<sup>10</sup> The chances that the resulting collision will severely damage the Army are great—again, not 100 percent certain, but significant. The chances that the Army will be severely damaged if it bets that the world will not swerve therefore seem to us too great for the Army to refuse even to consider its alternatives. Thus, we examine alternative organizational visions of the Army in the next two sections.

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<sup>10</sup>In fact, signs that the collision is already occurring have appeared. The view of top civilian officials in the United States has shifted from "wait and see" to something like cautious optimism. The Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) talks seem likely to result in significant bilateral reductions in Europe, and Soviet forces are unilaterally withdrawing from Czechoslovakia and Hungary. As one might expect in light of these changing perceptions and threats, the Defense Department now plans to begin significant force reductions (of two divisions, in the Army's case) in fiscal year 1991. Some analysts have discussed reductions of 50 percent in the U.S. military structure in the next decade or so, and few are treating such discussions as absurd. Such reductions would obviously result in great harm to any Army still possessing a vision of itself as the instantly ready armored defender of central Europe.

### **"EARLY WARNING" CRITERIA FOR THE ARMY'S CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL VISION**

But first, we think it worth noting that the Army does not currently even know *how to tell whether its current organizational vision is in jeopardy*, and therefore how to tell when the future is so near to colliding with the Army that the Army has no more time to temporize. Will implementing President Bush's proposal to withdraw 60,000 forward-deployed U.S. troops from Europe make the Army incapable of effecting its current organizational vision?<sup>11</sup> What if, in the future, placing the first fully ready armored division on the Continent takes 30 days, and only five more will be able to join it after 90 days of mobilization? What if the Army has only six heavy divisions in its entire active force structure, or none in the active structure and only six in the reserves? What will the Army need to fight alongside foreign governments in large-scale battles against foreign drug producers, and will it then still be able to effect its current vision? Some of these outcomes or contingencies may seem remote, but we are not convinced they are any more remote than the war in central Europe for which the Army has so carefully been preparing itself.

Some of the Army's current knowledge will be useful in constructing the criteria to use in determining whether the Army's current organizational vision is in serious jeopardy. But the Army has focused for so long on obtaining and allocating the resources to give it confidence it *can* effect its current organizational vision that the Army may have lost sight of how to judge with confidence that it *cannot* effect its current vision. The Army should have answers to questions, such as those we posed above, about its ability to effect its vision, and the criteria it employs in answering such questions should be specific, for there will always be incentives—as there are with impending conflicts—to ignore the warning signs. We therefore advocate the development of "early warning" criteria for the Army as an institution—criteria not unlike those the Army has sought in order to be prepared for war in Europe.

<sup>11</sup>The *Washington Post* has reported that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr., concluded that a withdrawal of 70,000 U.S. troops would vitiate NATO's forward-defense strategy, but that a withdrawal of 35,000 (the initial U.S. position) was acceptable. See the *Washington Post*, June 11, 1989, p. A1. President George Bush's more recent proposal to withdraw 60,000 U.S. troops implies that if Admiral Crowe is correct, and if the Army cannot effect its organizational vision without incorporating a forward defense by NATO, the Army is perilously close to the choice between collision and the need to adopt a new organizational vision. This sort of ability to draw lines is what we have in mind, but along a whole variety of dimensions besides simply the number of active-duty troops deployed in Europe.

Developing such criteria is a daunting task in itself, but we can at least try to provide some examples of the dimensions along which the Army should be able to make such judgments, without our asserting that their particulars are correct:

- The Army should begin planning to change its current organizational vision if, for three years running, it cannot have six heavy divisions in Europe after 15 days of mobilization and if the Warsaw Pact force deploys in peacetime ten highly ready divisions in the German Democratic Republic (GDR).
- The Army cannot sustain its current organizational vision with an annual budget of less than \$50 billion.
- The Army requires 500,000 active-duty forces to fulfill its current organizational vision, unless its reserve forces train for at least ten weeks a year.

When the warning signs are sufficiently unfavorable—and the Army should decide specifically which combinations of values constitute a sufficiently unfavorable situation—the Army should begin seriously exploring its alternatives.

In setting these criteria, of course, the Army should remind itself that generating an alternative vision and convincing those outside the Army to give it enough time to implement the necessary changes will take some time. Although a writer on the editorial pages of a newspaper can restructure the Army in a few paragraphs, and although Sec. VI attempts to set forth similarly sweeping restructurings in a few pages, the Army itself is likely to have to expend a great deal more time and ink in doing so. As Sec. VI argues, a new organizational vision for the Army will mean new force structures, new procurement programs, new training, and new doctrines—changes, in other words, in all the tools available to the Army to effect any organizational vision.<sup>12</sup> Such changes cannot take place overnight. Indeed, even a paper comparison of the different outcomes of different organizational visions will take a good deal of time and effort to formulate if it is to be useful enough to allow the Army to advance one alternative vision over others with any confidence. The Army may wish to go beyond paper studies

<sup>12</sup>We must emphasize the breadth and depth of change involved in implementing a new vision. It is currently expedient for the Army, in light of its success in Panama and current congressional sentiments, to emphasize its lighter forces and its forces based in the United States. One year of emphasis to court budgetary favor, however, would not a change of vision make. For example, M-1 production may be slated to cease, but if the funds are simply shifted to production of a newer, better tank, then little has changed. See Sec. VI for examples of the sorts of fundamental changes the Army would need to implement to make any new organizational vision come to life.



to some exercises or field testing and may wish to explore several options more or less in parallel before deciding among them. In light of the time lags likely to adhere to these various explorations, even an Army that hopes to retain its current organizational vision might do well to consider in advance the possibility that some alternative vision of the Army will become a reality. Otherwise, the Army will, like the pilot of a supertanker who has seen a reef too late, know that disaster is coming but be unable to alter its course soon enough to prevent a collision.

## VI. ALTERNATIVE VISIONS OF THE ARMY

Because we believe that the world's course is not very likely to swerve and that a collision between the world and the Army would harm the Army a great deal, this section explores the question of what alternative organizational visions the Army might adopt. Unfortunately, we know of no logically unassailable way to bound the range of alternative visions for the Army. If we list 6 or 12 or 50 alternatives, what makes them a complete set or even adequate coverage of the possibilities? We think it both inappropriate and unnecessary, however, simply to throw up our hands at the multiplicity of possibilities and fail to set forth *some* visions for a future Army.

We have chosen to use the Army's current vision and some key choices implied by that vision as the basis for developing some alternatives. We do not pretend that our set is complete, but we think the *process* is illustrative of what can and must be done in examining alternative visions for the Army. We have formulated eight visions around the answers to three fundamental questions (choices) we find implicit in the Army's current vision:

1. Will a significant part of the Army be forward deployed?
2. Will the Army rely mostly on active-duty or reserve forces?
3. Will the Army be mostly about combat power or general military service?<sup>1</sup>

The answer to each question is theoretically independent of the answers to the other two. The Army could, for example, focus on general military service instead of combat power but retain its forward deployments and its emphasis on active-duty forces. Eight visions of the Army are therefore possible:

1. A forward-deployed Army focused on the combat power of its active forces, which is the Army's current vision of itself as the "instantly ready armored defender of central Europe";

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<sup>1</sup>We recognize that we might use other questions (choices) in the Army's current vision to explore additional visions, but we have restricted our research, because of limited resources, to the three we list here. We discuss below how two of the more obvious additional questions—the geographic focus of the Army and its heavy/light force mix—are partly included within the three questions we have chosen to explore in the greatest depth.

2. A centrally based (U.S.-based) Army focused on the combat power of its active forces, which we call the "global expeditionary force";
3. A forward-deployed Army focused on the combat power of its reserve forces, which we call the "cadre of democracy";
4. A forward-deployed Army focused on general military service performed by active forces, which we call "soldiers on the front lines";
5. A centrally based Army focused on the combat power of its reserve forces, which we call the "arsenal of democracy";
6. A centrally based Army focused on general military service performed by active forces, which we call the "nation's military servant";
7. A forward-deployed Army focused on general military service performed by reserve forces, which we call "soldiers on the spot"; and
8. A centrally based Army focused on general military service performed by reserve forces, which we call the "army of planners."<sup>2</sup>

Figure 2 structurally arrays these eight alternatives. We treat each of these organizational visions for the Army in turn, beginning with those involving the fewest changes to the Army's current vision and working our way toward the radically different vision of the army of planners.

### THE INSTANTLY READY ARMORED DEFENDER OF CENTRAL EUROPE

We have discussed this as the Army's current vision above. Here we will simply note that this vision clearly fits into our three-question framework: The current Army clearly deploys a substantial portion of its forces forward, relies mostly on the current performance of its active forces, and focuses on combat power.

Although these particular answers to our three fundamental questions do not require the Army to be an instantly ready *armored*

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<sup>2</sup>Our approach to generating these visions is rational and analytical: We take the Army's current vision, break it down into questions that can each have a yes-or-no answer, and methodically change those answers to create a set of new visions. We might have taken an intuitive approach and simply thought up a number of independent visions that each "felt right" but that did not, when taken together, necessarily fit into any overarching framework. Either approach is acceptable as long as it leads to productive discussion of alternative visions for the Army.

	Focused on combat power		Focused on military service	
	Focused on readying active forces	Focused on readying reserve forces	Focused on readying active forces	Focused on readying reserve forces
Based forward	Instantly ready armored defender of central Europe	Cadre of democracy	Soldiers on the front line	Soldiers on the spot
Based in United States	Global expeditionary force	Arsenal of democracy	Nation's military servant	Army of planners

Fig. 2—Eight organizational visions for the future Army

defender of *central Europe* as a matter of pure logic, we assume that these aspects would for practical reasons be incorporated in the Army's organizational vision as long as the Army was an organization of forward-deployed, active-duty warriors. We recognize that the Army's forward deployments could theoretically be at any point on the globe outside the United States, or that the means to achieve the Army's combat power could theoretically be forces besides the armor-heavy units the Army has chosen to effect its current vision. But in light of the way in which the histories of the world and the Army have actually unfolded, the vision of the instantly ready armored defender of central Europe seems likely to have a great deal more staying power and plausibility than other visions about forward-deployed forces focused on active forces and on combat power. We do not, for example, consider very plausible a vision of the Army as the instantly ready light-infantry defender of Saudi Arabia's oil fields or of Norway's mountain passes. Such visions are unlikely to be very attractive either to the Army<sup>3</sup> or to the relevant host nations.

<sup>3</sup>See Builder, *The Masks of War*, pp. 138-142, for an examination of the Army's historical focus on central Europe.

## THE GLOBAL EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

### Characteristics

Extensive forward deployments shape the Army in many ways. As long as the Army depends upon host nations for a significant portion of its bases, the Army must be sensitive to matters of international comity and politics that it could otherwise leave entirely to diplomats. In addition, as long as the Army has a large number of forward bases, it can plausibly claim to have effected its current vision and provided an instantly ready heavy force. In contrast, without extensive forward bases, the time and effort necessary to move heavy units to the combat zone would make the Army's claim of effective, instantly ready forward defense by heavy units an inherently unbelievable assertion.<sup>4</sup> And as long as so much of the Army's current infrastructure is tied up in forward basing in central Europe and the rapid reinforcement thereof, the Army will likely be focused on central Europe as its primary potential battleground.

If the Army falls back from forward deployments to a more centralized basing scheme but continues to focus on active-duty forces and on combat power, it will likely become a large-scale global expeditionary force. Ready on short notice to deploy a substantial force of soldiers to foreign lands, this Army would provide airborne (and perhaps air-assault) troops for the earliest stages of U.S. intervention, and then "feed in" units with heavier firepower for much more sustained and intensive operations.<sup>5</sup>

Although this Army would, because of its lack of forward deployments and its shift from a European focus to a global orientation, become more like the Marines, the Army as global expeditionary force would still be quite distinct from the Marines. The Marines' identity rests upon its role as an amphibious-assault force, as one can infer from its insistence upon going ashore over the beach even when a friendly port has been available. An Army that draws its sense of identity and purpose from being a global expeditionary force would, except for its airborne components, typically require a friendly port for its insertion and would be expected to be capable of much more sustained and intensive combat than a force of Marines. Indeed, this is descrip-

<sup>4</sup>For this reason, we believe POMCUS units count as part of the Army's forward "deployments" for our purposes. The rapid delivery of troops (by air) is plausible, while the rapid delivery of their heavy equipment (by sea) is not (as things now stand).

<sup>5</sup>The invasion of Panama fits this pattern, except that in Panama a large number of forward-deployed troops were available to provide the heavy firepower that would otherwise have to be transported by sea.

tive of the Army during World War II, particularly in the Pacific theater.<sup>6</sup>

Theoretically, of course, an Army that is centrally based but retains its focus on active-duty warriors could simply modify its current identity slightly and become the "*fairly* ready armored defender of central Europe," with heavy forces highly trained in the United States and ready at a moment's notice to begin the haul across the Atlantic. We believe, however, that such a vision is unlikely to be stable. If the Army invested heavily in strategic lift or was able somehow to persuade its sister services to do the heavy investing on the Army's behalf, it could retain its claim to the armored defense of Europe. Such an Army would, however, be inherently almost as ready to defend *non-European* areas of the world as well. In the absence of substantial forward deployments in Europe, the comparative difficulty of deploying to non-European theaters would diminish substantially, especially if the Army invested heavily in strategic lift.<sup>7</sup> (Similarly, though over a longer period of time, forces would no longer be especially suited to fighting in Europe because of an extensive familiarity with the relevant terrain.) If the Army chose instead to reduce its dependence on heavy forces in order to maximize its combat power for any given amount of lift, then the resulting lighter Army would not only be easier to transport to non-European battlefields than is the current Army, but also much more effective when it arrived. In light of changing public perceptions about the relative threats to U.S. security, we assume that the Army would be expected in either of these situations to be capable of large-scale defense in various places around the globe, not just in Europe. Thus, regardless of whether the Army attempted to increase its available lift or reduce its dependence on lift, its sense of purpose and identity might shift significantly from its current position once moved from its current resting point.

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<sup>6</sup>The global expeditionary force might, however, benefit from careful study of both the U.S. Marines and the professional component of the current French army, which acts as an expeditionary force in Europe and Africa.

<sup>7</sup>The differences would then depend upon transport time and whatever preexisting infrastructure existed. Central America and much of South America would remain closer to the United States than would Europe; the western edge of the Pacific Rim and the Persian Gulf would remain at least twice as far as Europe. The highly developed European nations would remain the most intrinsically favorable logistical environment, holding aside differences in transport miles, while a deployment to a Gulf state desert would remain the least favorable. The overall differences would narrow substantially, however, if Europe no longer enjoyed the immense logistical advantage of having already deployed there the heavy equipment and associated infrastructure of more than half a dozen divisions.

### Changes Necessary

The global expeditionary force would differ from the current Army vision in its answer to only one of our three fundamental questions. The implementation of this new vision would nonetheless require extensive changes by the Army, all centered around a single dilemma: *How can the Army create a force light enough in weight to possess the requisite strategic mobility and simultaneously heavy enough in firepower to possess the requisite combat power?*<sup>8</sup> The Army has typically chosen not to treat weight as a crucial factor in weapons design in comparison to firepower, and the resulting units have become heavier and heavier as they have come to possess more and more firepower.<sup>9</sup>

A global expeditionary force could not afford this luxury and would require a careful balancing of weight and firepower in the design of everything from its individual weapons to its divisions. Some weapons already developed, such as the advanced tactical cruise missiles (ATACMs) and its submunitions, might be suitable for a high-firepower, low-weight Army. A global expeditionary force would need to focus its R&D efforts not only on technologies that provide more bang for the pound, but also on those that offer more protection for the pound, such as lightweight armor or vehicles with lower silhouettes. "Soft" force multipliers, such as command-and-control systems or training, are worthy of special attention because they may offer increases in firepower with no increase in weight.

In addition, a global expeditionary force could not even pretend that the strategic lift currently available to the Army would be adequate. Getting more lift and more efficient lift would not be an easy task in light of the fact that the Army does not now control its own strategic lift, but the Army would need to increase its efforts to obtain such lift nonetheless. The Army might also wish to explore technologies that would allow it to meld tactical and strategic transportation, such as a refuelable tilt-rotor aircraft capable of carrying a company of soldiers and its equipment thousands of miles.

A global expeditionary force would require major changes in training and doctrine, as well as in technology. Consistent with its current vision, the Army's doctrinal focus has been on high-intensity combat with forward-deployed forces in central Europe against a highly capable

<sup>8</sup>An alternative would be to develop transport technology that could move heavy units—and their support units and associated supplies—very rapidly and at acceptable cost. This alternative might, however, leave the Army poorly equipped to fight wars in terrains unsuited for tank warfare. It would nonetheless be a worthy avenue to explore for an Army that saw itself as a global expeditionary force.

<sup>9</sup>See, for example, Benjamin F. Schemmer, "Airlift, Sealift in Short Supply at Very Time Need Grows Fastest," *Armed Forces Journal International*, May 1989, p. 66.

opponent, and so has its training. Although AirLand Battle doctrine is implicitly applicable to conflict anywhere, at all levels of intensity, its presumption of forward-deployed forces is too evident<sup>10</sup> for it to be considered seriously in areas other than central Europe or, perhaps, on the Korean Peninsula.

In contrast to its current vision, the Army has twice been called upon since World War II to fight in Asia in midintensity conflicts. In the future, it may be asked to fight more effectively in low-intensity wars against terrorism (whatever its causes) or drug cartels around the globe. The Army's record in these conflicts, so far, has not been encouraging<sup>11</sup>; this may be part of the reason for the Army's deliberate focus elsewhere—on an improbable, but challenging, conflict in Europe with the Soviets. This divergence between the real conflicts and the one for which the Army has most prepared itself has hurt the Army repeatedly across a whole range of issues:

- In the friction of its interactions with civilian leaders or a general populace concerned with limiting wars as much as with winning them;
- In the inapplicability of Army doctrine, training, and even its equipment to mid- or low-intensity conflicts;
- In the unwieldiness of a force structure designed to fight and support tank battles when infantry clashes have in fact predominated.

At the strategic level, the global expeditionary force would need to recognize that political constraints are an integral aspect of mid-intensity conflicts, to shape these constraints to a degree appropriate for a military service strictly subordinated to civilian politicians, and to work within these constraints instead of interpreting them as "failures of political will" or a "lack of popular support." At the operational level, a global expeditionary force would need to develop doctrines for mid- and low-intensity conflicts that are woven to fit those types of warfare rather than scaled-down patterns cut from the high-intensity cloth. Army doctrine under this vision would need to treat extensively the collection (or at least the proper use) of long-term, nonbattlefield intelligence and the logistical challenges of operating in areas without extensive infrastructure. Special-operations forces would be considered as much more than "strike force" adjuncts to high-intensity warfare.

<sup>10</sup>See work by James A. Dewar and Morlie H. Levin at The RAND Corporation on sources of change in Army doctrine in the next 30 years.

<sup>11</sup>The Army has been more successful in applying overwhelming force against the forces of Grenada and Panama. Such contingencies, however, cannot justify a total active force much larger than the 82nd Airborne Division.



And the global expeditionary force would be much more concerned, in mid- and low-intensity conflicts, with exploiting reconnaissance and direct firepower than deep fires or intense blankets of indirect or combat-support firepower.

## THE CADRE OF DEMOCRACY

### Characteristics

If the Army retains both significant forward deployments and its focus on combat power, but shifts to a much greater reliance upon reserve forces, the result will be a cadre of democracy—a relatively elite group of active-duty personnel serving as the mobilization and training cadre for a rapid buildup of the Army to its required wartime strength. As in the years before World War II, the United States would rely upon sufficient strategic warning or a sufficiently slow-moving battle to allow it to mobilize large numbers of reserve personnel. In this vision, the Army would keep large quantities of modern equipment deployed forward under the active component's custody and would not, therefore, need to mobilize the industrial base as well as the reserves.

The contrasts between this vision and the Army's current vision run deep, even though the answer to only one of our three fundamental questions has changed. Under its current vision, the Army uses the scarce time and resources of its active forces to maximize its own combat effectiveness. As the *instantly ready* armored defender of Europe, the Army tries to maintain as many active units as possible and keep them as ready as possible. Only small portions of the current active Army are concerned with maximizing the potential combat power of the reserves or of the nation's industrial mobilization base. Indeed, the bulk of the active-reserve flow is in the opposite direction: Under its current vision, the Army plans to use the reserves to maximize the combat power of the active-duty forces, by "rounding out" active units with support units manned by reservists.

### Changes Necessary

If the Army is to become the cadre of democracy, it must take a new perspective on the active/reserve balance. Indeed, the crucial problem of the cadre of democracy revolves around this balance: *How can the Army best leverage a small active force into a large force of combat-ready reservists?* This problem includes, though goes far beyond, the question of how many divisions should be designated "active" and how many

"reserve." The cadre of democracy might in fact choose to do away with the distinction between active divisions and reserve divisions, and instead create a force structure in which *all* divisions have a small active core and leave large percentages of their *combat* troops as well as their support troops to be rounded out with reserves.<sup>12</sup> The cadre of democracy would also be at some pains to see that its training regimen for active-duty troops provided for the translation of units into a powerful total force. Should the active-duty forces spend a great deal of time learning how to train others, or should they focus instead on the skills of soldiering and leave it to the reservists to learn by the professionals' example? The problem would be posed with special clarity in the event of an actual conflict: In what proportion should the Army plan to divide the missions of its active-duty forces during a conflict between actually containing the enemy themselves and training the reservists?

An Army relying mostly on the combat power of the reserves is also likely to pay considerable attention to the problem of strategic warning. The current Army hedges heavily against poor strategic warning by keeping a large number of forward-deployed forces instantly ready. An Army that relies heavily upon reserve forces is much more dependent on strategic warning. The Army is obviously unlikely to have exclusive authority over the strategic-warning problem, but the cadre of democracy would need to do its best to ensure that it could collect, analyze, and exploit effectively the information available for strategic warning.

## SOLDIERS ON THE FRONT LINES

### Characteristics

If the Army retains its forward deployments and its focus on active forces, but changes its self-perception from that of warrior to that of general military servant, the resulting vision would be what we call "soldiers on the front lines." In this vision, Army personnel scattered around the globe would practice their many crafts as soldiers (not just warriors), would assist the armed forces of other nations in their crafts,

<sup>12</sup>Such a structure would require activating some reservists for the Army to conduct a mid-intensity war, and perhaps even for some low-intensity interventions. During the Vietnam War, "calling up the reserves" involved a general manpower mobilization and was a barrier politically too momentous to be crossed. In a force structure in which no division could be ready for combat without calling up some reservists, the Army would need credible assurances that political authorities would view quite differently the *selective* mobilization necessary to make such a force structure work.

and would serve as peacekeepers, border patrollers, and the providers of "military presence." The front line would not be just the inter-German border, but wherever the Army applied its military skills; the Army's people would serve not just as warriors or their adjuncts, but as practitioners of general military service.

### Changes Necessary

This change from the current Army's focus on combat power on a traditional battlefield is in many ways a more subjective area than the Army's basing mode or its active/reserve balance; it is a change not of location or duty status, but of mind or purpose. Nonetheless, to implement any vision of an Army of general military service would result in changes just as concrete as those involved in creating a centrally based or a reserve-oriented Army. In this instance, those changes would center on the single question: *How can the Army create a force that can effectively perform a wide variety of missions?* The current Army is optimized to perform a single, highly specialized mission—the forward defense of central Europe by high-technology forces against a highly capable opponent in high-intensity warfare. An army of soldiers on the front lines, in contrast, would need to prepare itself to execute competently a whole range of missions, such as

- Providing combat support services to allies with relatively unsophisticated armies or security forces against other nations, insurgents, terrorists, or even outlaws;
- Patrolling the nation's borders against illegal immigration or drugs;
- Providing a concrete, permanent U.S. military presence as evidence of the United States' political commitment<sup>13</sup>;
- Contributing to international peacekeeping forces;
- Undertaking "nation-building" efforts in areas too logistically austere or too dangerous for civilian personnel;
- Conducting on-site inspections pursuant to nuclear, conventional, chemical, or biological arms control treaties.

Because of its focus on a high-tech war in defense of central Europe, the Army has shown little affection for these more general, more mundane military tasks, even while undertaking many of them. Although the Army has focused its intellectual energies on a war in Europe, the Army's actual military operational activities have been more consistent

<sup>13</sup>The U.S. Army plays such a role in the Republic of Korea. Its current deployments in the FRG far exceed those necessary to demonstrate such a commitment.

with an army of soldiers on the front lines. If the Army were to shift to that latter vision intellectually as well as operationally, a number of changes would likely follow.

Training would probably be the most important tool in implementing the vision of the Army as soldiers on the front line. The Army's current training regime may be an excellent one to prepare warriors. A different balance of military skills is needed, however, for those who may have to defend themselves in combat but who are also acknowledged to be more likely to spend their time training or advising others, assuming peacekeeping duties, or making on-site inspections. The Army has high-technology medical-support and intelligence-collection systems, but it would need to devote more effort in training such personnel—and the members of allied armies—to participate in forces that exploit U.S. technology without necessarily involving U.S. forces directly in combat.<sup>14</sup> And training personnel for a successful “war” against drug production or urban terrorism would seem to present completely different training problems from those needed to train a warrior to defend the Fulda Gap. To support these myriad missions, the Army would need to train more intelligence specialists, more linguists, more advisers—in other words, fewer warriors.

Developing an officer corps with a breadth and length of experience would be another top “training” priority of soldiers on the front lines. Given the wide variety of tasks an Army of general military service can expect to be assigned, experience in a wide variety of situations for its individual officers will be especially useful. An army of soldiers on the front lines will not have the relative luxury of making up for any lack of professionalism or experience by being able to focus limited experience and abilities on the single goal of providing combat power on the conventional battlefield. Of equal importance, if the Army is to succeed at a diversity of tasks and still retain its identity as a *military* servant rather than simply as a pool of manpower for the federal government to apply wherever it wishes, the Army will need an officer corps that approaches its tasks in a distinctly military—and, presumably, in a distinctly competent—fashion. A very high degree of professionalism and experience in the officers—and even in the enlisted men—of an Army of soldiers in the front lines is therefore *essential*. If the Army in fact adopts a vision of general military service, it will, over time, also have the opportunity to develop a versatile, highly professional, long-serving officer corps as it is called upon to deploy its members to accomplish a wide variety of tasks.

<sup>14</sup>Such a force plays not only to a comparative U.S. advantage in technology, but also to the high levels of education and initiative found in the United States' armed services. Such a force is also consistent with the desire to minimize casualties—a desire that has characterized American military endeavors from almost their inception.

We cannot predict without careful study the force structures, procurements, and R&D plans that would flow from an Army of general military service. Nonetheless, an Army of soldiers on the front lines would clearly have a greater proportion of light and supporting forces than does the current Army.

In addition, having an Army whose every part is ready for every conceivable mission that might be assigned will be impossible. Rather, the Army is likely to find it wisest to ensure that some part of itself is highly skilled and ready for each possible task it might take up, and that the rest of the Army is imbued with a spirit of professionalism and flexibility that allows those additional resources to be devoted temporarily to the most urgent missions facing the Army at a given time.

Although an army of soldiers on the front lines is a dramatic shift from the Army's current vision, it is not a radical departure from much of the Army's history. From almost its inception until the 1940s, the Army was the versatile, obedient military servant of the United States. When the nation needed a force to quell rebellion in the Philippines, the Army responded. When the United States needed an expeditionary force to send to Europe or to Cuba (or even to Richmond and Atlanta), the Army—usually after a significant training period and a dramatic increase in its size—sent a victorious one. And even when the government had more mundane or domestic tasks before it, such as delivering the mail or protecting frontiersmen or building dams, the Army answered the call. In contrast to the Navy's vision of itself as the guardian of tradition and independence, or the Air Force's self-image as a collection of dashing pioneers of aviation, the Army saw itself as the country's loyal second son—quiet, dutiful, capable, and never flashy or defiant.

## THE ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY

### Characteristics

If the Army retains its focus on combat power but becomes centrally based rather than forward deployed, and also changes its emphasis from active to reserve forces, its vision will become that of the arsenal of democracy. Like the cadre of democracy, this Army will need to concentrate on how best to leverage the active-duty forces to provide the maximum potential combat power for the total force. Because this Army would not have the benefit of extensive forward deployments in Europe, however, it would also suffer two disadvantages compared to the cadre of democracy:

- It would not have the opportunity to train its active units (and some fraction of its reserves) on the European (or other overseas) terrain on which it might fight.
- It would not have any of its equipment forward deployed.

### Changes Necessary

Because of this second concern, the Army as the arsenal of democracy would need to balance the manpower mobilization of its reserves with the need to transport its equipment to Europe (or elsewhere). It might therefore be driven toward answering the same question that must be faced by the global expeditionary force: What combination of unit structure and transportation can provide the Army with sufficiently lightweight and sufficiently heavy-firepower units? Nonetheless, transportation will not necessarily prove to be a limiting factor for the arsenal of democracy. In contrast to the global expeditionary force, the reserve-oriented arsenal of democracy would not have a large active force immediately ready for transport overseas, and might therefore be able to balance manpower mobilization with its mobilization of transportation capacity.<sup>15</sup>

A potentially more permanent imbalance might arise, however, if the end of forward deployments were accompanied by a significant diminution in the Army's weapons stocks. If the weapons necessary to equip a reserve force were not maintained in storage in the United States, then a manpower mobilization would also need to be accompanied by a significant industrial mobilization, and the United States would become an arsenal of democracy as in World War II. The lead time necessary to produce modern weapons has increased dramatically, however. If the United States were not simply to bank on being able to take years to rearm, the Army would need to pursue one or both of two avenues:

- It could explore and implement ways to "surge" industrial production of current weapons systems very rapidly—and not by a peacetime accumulation of "capacity" in the abstract, but by the ability to churn out greatly increased levels of actual production in a few months. This would be a feat the nation did not even accomplish in World War II, when equipping a sizable U.S. force with weapons much less complex than those in use today took well over a year.
- The other avenue of approach would be to develop a class of "surge" weapons that would be produced in large numbers only

<sup>15</sup>See fn. 12 above for a brief discussion of the possible political difficulties involved in some reserve-oriented force structures.

during mobilization—equivalents, for a modern Army, of the Liberty ship. These weapons would be much simpler, or much more closely related to current civilian goods, than current weapons, but would allow industry to equip a vast pool of reserves rapidly.

In pursuing these avenues, the Army would need to take into account that it would be competing with the other services for scarce resources, and that an industrial mobilization could place greater or lesser priorities among forces for strategic nuclear offense, strategic nuclear defense, and conventional operations.

### THE NATION'S MILITARY SERVANT

If the Army were to become centrally based and shift its focus from combat power to general military service, but nonetheless retain its focus on active-duty forces, we assume that it would resemble an army of soldiers on the front lines in important ways. A centrally based Army would, however, seem likely to focus more of its attention on *domestic* tasks and concerns—such as patrolling the borders, rebuilding the nation's infrastructure, and cleaning up the environment—wherever such tasks posed a danger or a need for a highly disciplined implementing organization fully responsible to the public interest. Nonetheless, the same central goal (performing a wide variety of tasks effectively) and tool for achieving that goal (training) would preoccupy both the nation's military servant and the army of soldiers on the front lines.

### SOLDIERS ON THE SPOT

If the Army retained its forward deployments but changed both its focus on active-duty force and its focus on combat power, the resulting active-duty Army would consist of a small number of forces, based overseas, conducting a wide variety of general military services. Any serious commitment of forces—certainly a midintensity conflict, probably a significant military presence mission, and perhaps even a large-scale peacekeeping endeavor—would likely also require selectively mobilizing reserves.<sup>16</sup> The Army would consist of soldiers on the spot on active duty, who would, in most circumstances, need reinforcements from the reserves. The Army's active-duty soldiers would therefore be "on the spot" in two ways: They would be geographically deployed

<sup>16</sup>See fn. 12 above for a brief discussion of the possible political difficulties involved in selective mobilization.

forward at the trouble spot, and they would be "on the spot" in terms of being under a great deal of pressure until the necessary reinforcements arrived.

The active-duty forces could be highly specialized because the Army would not plan on completing any large-scale endeavors without calling up a subset of its reserves. This Army would, however, need to face not only the challenge of training forces to meet a wide variety of missions, but also that of mobilizing reserves to meet the need for additional forces. This factor would require the Army of soldiers on the spot to face many problems faced by the cadre of democracy. Because this Army would be oriented toward general military service, however, the reserves could, in many cases, make greater use of their civilian skills than is the case when reserves are expected to fight a high-intensity war.

### **AN ARMY OF PLANNERS**

An Army that was centrally deployed and focused on reserve forces and oriented toward general military service would represent a vision different in all three of its fundamental dimensions from the current Army's vision. An orientation toward general military service will require new emphasis on diversified training. A focus on reserve forces will demand attention to issues of mobilization and the best use of limited forces. A lack of forward deployments will presumably shift the focus of general military service closer to home, and would probably require increased attention to problems of transportation if that service were required overseas.

The resulting force would obviously be an Army quite different from today's Army, perhaps unrecognizably so. Indeed, with all these reorientations to make in a force that de-emphasized the active Army, the Army would essentially become an army of planners and trainers, perhaps in approximate balance. The planners would worry about mobilization and transportation and the design of forces for general military service, and the trainers would train a small number of active-duty forces and, as necessary, larger numbers of reserves to execute the particular task at hand. In a sense, this would be a return to the Army of the 1930s. Such an Army might be able to implement its vision with a half-dozen or so active divisions; indeed, this vision may be the only one the Army can reasonably implement if it suffers very deep force-structure or budgetary cuts.



## VII. CHOOSING A VISION

We have derived eight visions of a future Army from different answers to only three questions—questions we posed for precisely this purpose. One could ask others questions—although few may be so fundamental to the Army's future—and thereby generate other alternative visions of the Army. But although the Army's choice is almost certainly not limited to these eight, we have pressed on, for illustrative purposes, to consider the problem of choosing a vision from among the eight we have explored.

Four factors come to mind in trying to choose one of the visions:

1. The Army does not have an equal amount of control over the answers to each of the three fundamental questions that will shape its future vision. It has the most control over whether it will focus on combat power or general military service, and the least control over whether it will continue to have substantial portions of its force deployed overseas.
2. The different visions will likely require different levels of resources to fulfill, with the Army's current vision approximately the most expensive and the army of planners approximately the least expensive. The realism of different visions will depend in part upon their resource requirements, especially if the Army's budgets will be tightly constrained for an extended period of time.
3. The proper vision to choose will depend upon the proper balancing of the sometimes competing concerns of inspiration, realism and relevance, and clarity and distinctiveness.
4. The alternatives to the Army's current vision all involve a more diversified Army, and one that is in some sense closer to the American people than is the current Army. The Army might therefore wish to explore its means for diversifying and for identifying more closely with the American people, even before it has chosen a particular alternative vision.

We treat each of these factors in more depth below, but note that almost any comparison among alternative visions of the Army would involve issues similar to these first three factors and, perhaps, to the fourth as well.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Of course, one other problem will arise regardless of which vision the Army chooses: implementation. The road along the way from the Army's current vision to any alterna-

## THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL

The Army does not have equal control over the answers to each of the three fundamental questions we asked in generating alternative organizational visions for the Army. Even with respect to the first question—whether a significant portion of the Army will be forward deployed in the future—the Army may have differing degrees of control depending on which way it hopes to influence the decision. The Army will likely have more influence over the deployment of its forces forward than it does about their withdrawal from forward deployments. In a “push” situation in which non-Army actors desire forward deployments, the Army can exert some control, whereas in a “pull” situation in which non-Army actors wish to reduce forward deployments, the Army has almost no control. Forward deployments by the Army necessitate the consent not only of the Army and of the U.S. political leadership, but also—and most important—the acquiescence of host nations’ political leaderships. The Army may be able to resist efforts by political leaderships to deploy *more* forces forward, but if the political leaderships of the host nations decide *fewer* U.S. troops should be forward deployed in their countries, the Army or the U.S. political leadership can do little about it.

The Army’s influence over whether it focuses on active or reserve forces is a matter over which the Army has more—but not complete—control. Only the political leadership and public of the United States constrains the Army’s decisionmaking in this area, which gives the Army greater leverage than in situations in which foreign governments and publics are also involved—though, as in the case of forward deployments, the Army’s freedom of action will likely vary depending upon the direction in which the Army wishes to shift the active/reserve balance. If the Army wanted to move forces from the active forces to the reserves, for example, we think U.S. politicians would likely agree (as long, at least, as the defense budget is the target of budget cutters). If the Army were to attempt to move reserve forces into active status, however, we would be surprised if Congress acquiesced. The Army’s influence over the answer to this question is therefore limited in the same push-pull sense as it is with forward deployments, though not as stringently.

The choice between focusing on combat power and on general military service is where the Army’s latitude is widest. This question is

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tive will not be an easy one, and the Army should certainly consider whether some traversable road to a particular vision exists before beginning its journey. The problem of implementation also involves a decision about where and with whom the responsibility for change should rest. A fiery-eyed visionary may be necessary to implement a new vision, for example. We do not discuss these questions at any greater length here, however.

largely about the Army's self-perception, after all, and perceptions lie more firmly within the Army's sphere of decisionmaking than do more objective conditions, such as forward deployments or force structures. Congress and the executive branch might assign the Army missions inconsistent with a vision of itself as a warrior, for example, but the Army could perform these duties without much enthusiasm and without necessarily modifying its organizational vision. Indeed, some analysts would argue that the Army fought entire wars in Korea and Vietnam that were inconsistent with its current vision of itself as the armored defender of Europe, yet still managed to retain that vision as its guiding principle.

In sum, whether to focus on combat power or general military service is almost entirely within the Army's power to decide, whether to focus on active or reserve forces is to some extent the Army's choice to make, and whether the Army will have significant forward deployments is largely outside the Army's power to decide. In light of the different degrees to which the Army is master of its own fate on the various questions, the Army will have the greatest leverage in relation to the question over which it has the greatest control: *whether it sees itself as an Army of warriors or of general military servants providing a whole range of duties for its country*. In contrast, for the Army to expend a great deal of effort on, or make a large investment in, the active/reserve question or the forward/central-basing question may leave the Army out on a limb with domestic or foreign politicians standing nearby holding an ax.

## THE PROBLEM OF RESOURCES

The different visions we have set forth above will likely require different levels of resources to implement. A large active force requires more money to maintain than a large reserve force. Forward deployments are typically thought of as more expensive than central basing, though the issue becomes more difficult if one includes adequate transportation for centrally based forces as part of the equation. An Army focused on combat power will likely require more expensive and exotic equipment—and more R&D to bring that equipment to the field—than an Army focused on the more labor-intensive tasks of general military service.

The Army's current vision will likely be the most expensive of all eight visions we set forth above. It requires a highly ready active force focused on combat power. The army of planners will likely require the fewest resources of our eight visions since it consists of a reserve-oriented force based in the United States and focused on general

military service. In between these end points, we believe that the various visions will require an amount of resources that diminishes approximately in the order in which we presented them. The active/reserve question seems likely to dominate other resource considerations, and so the active-oriented visions seem likely to be more expensive than the reserve-oriented visions. Once the active/reserve choice has been made, we assume that combat-oriented visions will be more expensive than visions oriented toward general military service. Finally, after the active/reserve choice and the warrior/soldier choice, the visions with substantial forward-deployed troops seem likely to be more costly than those with centrally based troops.<sup>2</sup>

If the Army's budgets are tightly constrained for an extended period of time (something like 10 or 20 years, not 2 or 3), the realism of a particular vision will depend a great deal upon its resource requirements. If resources were to decline precipitously from their current levels, for example, the Army would be hard-pressed to maintain its current vision with anything but a "hollow" Army, while the nation's military servant (to take one example) is a vision that could be sustained with significantly fewer resources than the Army currently commands. An unrealistic organizational vision also discourages those inside an organization from taking the vision seriously enough to use it to guide their decisionmaking, and therefore will likely reduce the amount of coordination an organization can achieve without excessive centralization. And an unrealistic vision discourages those *outside* the organization from allocating its resources, such as budgetary dollars.

#### THE PROBLEM OF COMPETING ATTRIBUTES OF A CHOSEN VISION

Because we think the Army may well operate in an austere budget environment for some time to come, and because we think a temptation exists in any organization to be optimistic about the resources likely to be available in the future, we would urge the Army to examine the realism of any vision it finds appealing on other grounds. A broader question, however, faces the Army: how to *balance* all the sometimes competing concerns of inspiration, realism and relevance, and clarity.

<sup>2</sup>This last relationship, however, is the least clear. One might imagine that the global expeditionary force would actually be *more* expensive than the current Army, for example—at least during the period in which the Army was making large investments in creating a lightweight force with heavy firepower and in creating that force's essential transportation.

The Army's current sense of identity and purpose is inspiring—even glamorous—and that is a desirable characteristic for an organizational vision. That vision may be unrealistic, however, if the Army continues to face significant real budgetary declines for several years in a row (even assuming the budget then remains stable at a new, much lower level). Visions focused on general military service are in some ways less inspiring than those focused on combat power, partly because “serving” is a more complex concept—perhaps even an intrinsically less exciting one—than “fighting” or “winning,” and partly, we suspect, because combat-oriented visions require more resources to implement.<sup>3</sup> But one can easily exaggerate the lack of inspiration in service-oriented visions: Generations of career soldiers in the U.S. Army were proud indeed to have given three decades of their lives as the nation's military servants, and the masses of Americans mobilized to fight its wars were equally inspired by their (briefer) participation. Nonetheless, the possible trade-off between inspiration and realism is worthy of attention.

The Army should find exploring when visions have characteristics that do *not* compete with one another equally useful. The Marines, for example, have a vision—elite fighters going over the beach—that is inspirational, that distinguishes them from the other services, and that has proven realistic for decades. Visions for the Army in a changed world may similarly involve a minimum of competition among the desirable characteristics of organizational visions.

### THE PROBLEMS OF DIVERSIFICATION AND PROXIMITY

The alternatives to the Army's current vision all involve an Army that is in some way more diversified than the current Army. Armies that are more reserve-oriented diversify the Army's readiness. Centrally based armies diversify its geographical focus. Armies based on general military service diversify the Army's missions. In every case, the Army will face similar questions about *how* to diversify its forces, though along different dimensions. The most important is whether the Army should diversify by having *each component* be capable of a diversity of tasks, or instead by having each component be capable of only its specialized task but choosing those specializations so that the *force*

<sup>3</sup>Controlling large amounts of resources can serve both as a validation to members of the Army of their importance and as an absorbing enterprise. One most vivid example of this phenomenon outside the Army is the modern, single-seat fighter and its pilot. To be in singular control of a \$50-million airplane must strike its pilot both as an indication of how important he is and as an intrinsically fascinating endeavor.

as a whole is capable of a diversity of tasks. For example, should each active component of a reserve-oriented Army be capable of both fighting and training, or should such an Army have its various active components specialized and have (only) the Army as a whole capable of conducting the full range of its missions? Similarly, should each unit in an Army oriented toward general military service be able to perform a wide variety of tasks, or should each unit specialize in a particular task? Should all the equipment of a reserve-oriented Army with limited weapons stocks be susceptible to a "surge" in production, or should some items be surge items and others be stockpiled in advance? The Army should expect to face questions about which method of diversification is best—and other questions about where to take its risks—regardless of which particular vision it chooses.

The other thread running through our eight visions of a future Army is that alternatives to the current vision will all in some way bring the Army closer to the American people. This would literally be true if the Army brought its forward-deployed troops home and became a centrally based Army. In the case of reserve-oriented visions, the Army would consist in a much higher proportion of those who spent most of their time out of uniform; thus, the Army would become less distinguishable from the American people as a whole. In the case of service-oriented visions, the Army's missions would become closer to the people's daily concerns—environmental cleanups, for example, or the "war" on drugs—and further from the great-power worries the United States took upon itself after World War II.

In all these cases, the Army will need to pay more attention to the rest of U.S. society, whether because its bases in the United States encroach more frequently upon its own citizens' daily lives, or because the Army's effectiveness will depend upon how effectively it helps citizens bridge the gap from their civilian existence to duty as a mobilized reservist, or because the Army's missions will become more directly tied to its citizens' less abstract concerns. In this competition, the Army will likely be better placed than its sister services. A soldier does not inevitably sail off over the horizon to live a life apart, nor soar far above his peers in a high-tech flying machine. From its days as a ragged collection of militiamen through the raising of huge levees in wartime and, more recently, in peacetime, the Army has been rooted in its citizenry and their concerns.

## VIII. CONCLUSIONS

We have offered a general framework for confronting the Army's future. This framework consists of

- Focusing on the Army's organizational vision;
- Determining whether that vision will serve the Army well in the future;
- Determining whether a risk exists that the Army will be poorly served by its current vision, then exploring alternatives (and remembering that a new organizational vision for the Army will be a very significant undertaking requiring much time-consuming planning);
- Generating alternatives by asking a small number of fundamental questions;
- Comparing the alternatives, especially on the factors needed for a good organizational vision: inspiration, realism and relevance, and clarity and distinction.<sup>1</sup>

This framework should be useful to people concerned with the Army's future, regardless of their more specific judgments about the future and the Army. We have applied this framework to make specific judgments about the likelihood of a collision between the Army and its future environment, to suggest which aspects are important in an organizational vision for the Army, and to generate a set of alternative visions for the Army and explore the trade-offs and similarities among them.

In this section, we discuss an even more specific set of judgments about the future and the Army: some guesses and hopes about what will actually happen to the Army in the next five or ten years.

### NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

We think the national security planning environment is changing adversely for the institutional interests of all the military services. In part, at least, this adversity results from the military services' success

<sup>1</sup>Any vision must also be widely shared—stable and pervasive—if it is to be effective, but the problems of ensuring that a vision is widely shared do not vary much with the particular vision chosen, and so do not have a great influence on choosing among competing visions.

in playing their part in the national strategy of containment. Whether or not political leaderships will agree or history will confirm, the affected publics now believe that the Cold War has been won.<sup>2</sup> The military forces that were created and sustained to support the strategy of containment will, as with military forces after every war, be reduced and transformed. Budgets and forces will be cut, not just because of fiscal constraints or an unwillingness to pay for national security, but because the forces and the concepts for their employment are no longer perceived to be as pertinent as they once were to the nation's security.

### FORWARD DEPLOYMENTS

We think forward deployments of U.S. forces in Europe and in northeast Asia will be significantly reduced—perhaps even eliminated—before the turn of the century by political developments that are in turn driven mostly by international economic developments. The change will be wrenching for the current Army, though it would have been less so for its recent forebears.

It is doubtful that the United States [will] maintain its garrison of 324,000 troops in Europe, but it is worth remembering that the men who created the Western Alliance never dreamed that a U.S. Army would still be stationed in Europe 40 years later.<sup>3</sup>

The Army will be hurt by these reductions more than the Navy or the Air Force because the Army's sense of purpose and identity as the armored warrior ready to defend Europe will become untenable. That loss of purpose (and, from the public's point of view, of relevance) could induce additional budget reductions. The Army could well come to occupy the modern equivalent of the dusty camps of Kansas that it held during the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s—and become a small, underfunded cadre of professionals trying with woefully overstretched resources to perform military odd jobs and stay even remotely ready to mobilize and train the citizenry for war.

### THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Not to put too fine a point on it, we think an Army that clings to its current organizational vision will likely get hammered in the years immediately ahead—not just because of Gorbachev or budgets or changing national priorities or European pacifism, but because too

<sup>2</sup>See John Barry, Margaret Gerrard Warner, and Evan Thomas, "After the Cold War," *Newsweek*, May 15, 1989, pp. 20-25.

<sup>3</sup>Barry, Warner, and Thomas, "After the Cold War," p. 24.



many of these kinds of things are now working against the Army that has taken form in the relatively stable military planning environment of the past 40 years. The Army will have to change in some dramatic ways to adapt to a world that appears to be changing dramatically along many dimensions.

We think the key element for an Army that wishes to adapt to the changing military planning environment is the Army's vision of itself—its sense of identity and purpose, of what it is and what it is about. That vision is doubly important. If the current vision that guides Army decisionmaking is inappropriate on any of several attributes, it can actively hurt the Army more than help it. And without an appropriate vision, the Army can lose the sense of identity and purpose so necessary to organizational cohesiveness, pride, and decisiveness. If we could exhort the Army leadership to do one thing to protect and prepare the Army for the future, it would be to attend to its organizational vision and to begin *now* to develop and install a new vision more appropriate to the era that lies ahead. Properly chosen, a new vision can inspire the Army to retain, or even increase, its utility to the nation and its own morale—even in the face of changes that would de-emphasize and demoralize an Army with a poor organizational vision.

### THE BEST VISION TO CHOOSE

And what vision would we hope for it to choose if it did adopt a new sense of identity and purpose? We think the Army's current vision is no longer relevant or realistic even if forward deployments of U.S. forces or Army budgets are not significantly reduced. Thus, we would like to see the Army become an institution of general military service, not just a training ground for warriors. We do think that its forward deployments will be reduced significantly, however, and we therefore think that the visions that imagine such deployments are unrealistic. In our schema, a centrally based Army performing general military service can take two forms: the nation's military servant and the army of planners, depending upon whether that Army focuses on its active or its reserve forces. If the Army realizes soon enough that it needs a new organizational vision—ahead of the political, economic, and social changes that appear to be coming—then it can avoid finding itself an Army of planners and trainers back in those dusty camps of Kansas. If the Army adopts a new vision of itself as the nation's military servant soon enough, it should be able to convince America to give it the resources necessary to implement that vision. The resulting Army

would be smaller than today's Army and more conscious of the need to spend time preparing to mobilize the nation's industrial and manpower reserves in case of a significant war. Its active component, however, would still be potent enough to handle the Army's wide range of daily responsibilities, and it would still be an institution that offers a place of honor and respect to its active-duty forces.

In urging the Army to attend generally to its organizational vision, or suggesting more specifically that it aim toward a vision of itself as the nation's military servant, we would caution that none of the Army's alternatives may appear as attractive to it as does the current vision—at least if that current vision could be sustained into the 21st century as something besides a hollow hope. But the times that lie ahead simply may not permit realistic visions of the Army that are more attractive at this time than the vision that has guided the Army for the past 40 years. Therein lies a great danger. In the hope that retreat from its current vision may not be necessary, the Army may be unwilling to prepare as best it might for a future less desirable than the recent past. It would be unfortunate if the Army, determined to avoid the initial retreats of a General Washington or MacArthur, wound up in Custer's boots.

## Appendix

### ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

#### DEFINING ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

This appendix discusses the characteristics of organizational vision, examines the organizational visions of several public and private institutions, and discusses how such visions (or the lack thereof) can help (or harm) an organization. We define *organizational vision* as a sense of identity and purpose widely shared among the members of an organization. From the analysis of high-performing groups—groups of people who have performed well above expectations or the norm—one of the most consistent attributes is a shared sense of identity and purpose.<sup>1</sup>

*[T]he definition and clarification of purposes is . . . a prominent feature of every high-performing system I have ever investigated.*<sup>2</sup>

These high-performing systems are clear on their broad purposes and on nearer-term objectives for fulfilling these purposes. They know why they exist and what they are trying to do. Members have pictures in their heads that are strikingly congruent.

Motivation is "peculiar" in the literal sense of that word: "Belonging exclusively to one person or group; special; distinctive; different."<sup>3</sup>

That collective, shared sense of a distinct identity and purpose appears to be a hallmark of the most successful institutions.

In defining a vision, we distinguish between it and a strategy or a plan.<sup>4</sup> In this report, we take strategy to be a concept for relating

<sup>1</sup>Peter B. Vaill, "The Purposing of High-Performing Systems," *Organizational Dynamics*, Autumn 1982, pp. 23-39.

<sup>2</sup>Vaill, "Purposing," p. 24, emphasis in the original.

<sup>3</sup>Vaill, "Purposing," p. 26.

<sup>4</sup>The term *corporate strategy* as used by some analysts appears similar to our notion of an organizational vision. One work on management states that a "strategy guides the enterprise over a period of years, . . . is quite selective in the points it emphasizes, . . . is the dominant guide to action, . . . and guides the relationship of the enterprise to both its external environment and its internal activities" (William H. Newman, E. Kirby Warren, and Jerome E. Schnee, *The Process of Management: Strategy, Action, Results*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 5th ed., 1982, p. 22).

Others, however, use *strategy* or *vision* as synonyms for *plan*: "Strategy: A master plan that delineates critical courses of action toward the attainment of company objectives. . . ." (Y. N. Chang and Filemon Campo-Flores, *Business Policy and Strategy: Text*

means to ends.<sup>5</sup> This definition of strategy does not include the sense of identity we include in our definition of vision. Nor are the ends in strategy necessarily equivalent to the purpose in vision: Ends may be limited to objects or events, but purpose generally includes more, such as direction or a process. The difference between ends and purpose are illustrated by the two questions, "What are we trying to accomplish?" and "What are we about?" Organizational visions answer the second question and thus typically include the first. They are shared conceptions of identity and purpose, and so touch the past, the present, and the future; a plan is mostly about the means to an end, need not be widely shared, and looks only forward.

Thus, the sense of identity and purpose found in an organizational vision provides the members of the organization with more than they can find in corporate strategies or long-range plans. A vision provides the essential intellectual foundations for interpreting the past, deciding what to do in the present, and facing the future. This is true even for organizations charged with formulating doctrine, which, as we show below, is essentially an organizational vision for those concerned with the operational level of war.

Memories of the past, conditions of the present, and images of the future are all inherent to the intellectual process of formulating doctrine.<sup>6</sup>

For a vision to be widely shared among members of a large organization, it should be both comprehensive and relatively unchanging. An organizational vision is therefore much broader than the latest numerical guidelines or order of the day. The organizational vision should also be specific enough to resolve many of the actual decisions members of an organization must make. Therefore, by *organizational vision*, we mean something that conveys clearly, unambiguously, and uniquely what the organization is and what it is all about. That requires much more than slogans, such as "zero defects," "service," or

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*and Cases*, Goodyear Publishing Company, Santa Monica, Calif., p. 7); "This is a book about vision; more specifically, it is a book about long-range planning" (Perry M. Smith et al., *Creating Strategic Vision: Long-Range Planning for National Security*, National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., 1987, p. xv).

The idea of corporate culture is perhaps more closely related to our concept of organizational vision. See Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., *In Search of Excellence*, Warner Books, New York, 1982, pp. 103-106.

<sup>5</sup>See Builder, *The Masks of War*, p. 49. Builder notes, however, that "strategy takes on meaning mostly in the context of the identity and interests of its formulator" (p. 53, emphasis in the original).

<sup>6</sup>Paul H. Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations*, Leavenworth Paper No. 16, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1988, p. 102.

"excellence." Yet, as we will show, it need not require volumes to express or to recognize. Such visions are a discernible feature of successful organizations, whether military, governmental, or private sector.

## SOME INSTANCES OF VISION

### IBM

International Business Machines (IBM), Inc., is one organization with a long-standing organizational vision. The identity part of that vision is found in IBM's product focus. A listing of IBM's acquisitions during its 50-plus years of existence shows a single-minded early concentration on office machines and an equally directed, if less frequent, set of later acquisitions in the information-processing field.<sup>7</sup> The purpose part of that vision is detectable in the exhortations of IBM's leadership:

Establish excellent long-term relations with both customers and employees, and focus your efforts in the data-processing industry.

Respect . . . the individual [employee].

Give the best customer service of any company in the world.

Pursue all tasks with the idea that they can be accomplished in a superior fashion.<sup>8</sup>

The words of IBM's employees reflect that vision over and over again—though often without an expressed recognition that their comments are manifestations of a single vision.<sup>9</sup> We can summarize this vision as follows:

<sup>7</sup>See *Moody's Industrial Manual*, Vol. 1, p. 448. The single apparent exception is IBM's acquisition of an educational-testing company.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas J. Watson, Jr., *A Business and Its Beliefs: The Ideas That Helped Build IBM*, McGraw-Hill Company, New York, 1963, pp. 13, 24, 34. See also Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, pp. 258-260 (discussing IBM's policies with respect to its employees), 159-162 (discussing IBM's devotion to customer service). As we discuss below, however, we do not believe that the exhortation to do things "in a superior fashion" is sufficiently concrete to be part of an organizational vision.

<sup>9</sup>A 1987 letter from the chairman of the board to the shareholders in the company's annual report, for example, begins (after a brief discussion of corporate bottom lines) with a discussion of the importance of lasting customer relationships and ends with a passage to IBM employees. Reprinted in *Moody's Industrial Manual*, Vol. 1, pp. 449-450. See also Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, p. 160 (describing meetings of authors with a wide variety of IBM employees and ex-employees who used "practically the same words" as one another to describe the company).

- We're very big, but we're a computer company, not some conglomerate.
- We take care of our employees, good times or bad.
- We spend a tremendous amount of time figuring out what each customer needs, and making sure that they get it—even if they change their mind about what they need after buying it.

There is an "IBM way"—a vision of the organization's identity and purpose that is widely shared by its employees. This shared vision, and its daily implementation, is manifest to virtually everyone who examines IBM: "IBM operates with a single strong culture and unified set of goals."<sup>10</sup>

The anecdotal lore of IBM also provides some examples of ideas that, although widely known, are too broad or too narrow to constitute an organizational vision. Thomas J. Watson, Sr., architect of IBM's rise, had a sign prominently displayed on his desk, and in as many other places as he could manage: THINK.<sup>11</sup> But *think* could not be IBM's organizational vision as we define the term, for simply encouraging employees to think does not help them decide what to *do* when faced with a particular problem. *Think*, in other words, is too broad a concept to be an organizational vision. Watson admitted as much:

Asked later what he meant by the slogan, Watson replied, "By THINK I mean take everything into consideration. I refuse to make the sign more specific. If a man just sees THINK, he'll find out what I mean. We're not interested in a logic course."<sup>12</sup>

The elder Watson also insisted that his male employees wear only starched-collar, solid-white, dress shirts.<sup>13</sup> But "dress conservatively" is too narrow a concept to define an organization's identity or purpose.

<sup>10</sup>Nancy Foy, *The Sun Never Sets on IBM*, William Morrow and Company, New York, 1976, p. xiii. For other discussions of IBM's shared vision, see Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, pp. 159-162, 258-260; Robert Sobel, *IBM vs. Japan: The Struggle for the Future*, Stein and Day, New York, 1986, pp. 83-93; and F. W. "Buck" Rodgers, *The IBM Way: Insights into the World's Most Successful Marketing Organization*, Harper and Row, New York, 1986.

<sup>11</sup>William Rodgers, *THINK: A Biography of the Watsons and IBM*, Stein and Day, New York, 1969, pp. 98-99.

<sup>12</sup>Thomas Graham Belden and Marva Robbins Belden, *The Lengthening Shadow: The Life of Thomas J. Watson*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, Mass., 1962, p. 158.

<sup>13</sup>Belden and Belden, *The Lengthening Shadow*, pp. 131-132; Rodgers, pp. 92-93. The old dress code has disappeared, but it still casts its shadow. When the Intel Corporation's chief executive officer heard in the mid-1980s that IBM was rumored to be interested in buying his company, he said, "God, I hope not. I only own one white shirt" (Sobel, *IBM vs. Japan*, p. 201).

An organization is more than external appearances, and so is an organizational vision. Of course, the haberdashery of members of an organization may reflect or reinforce the organization's vision. Watson had a vision of seriousness and service, and conservative dress accorded with that vision.<sup>14</sup>

Organizational vision does not exist simply because the highest-level decisionmaker in an organization, or even several top-level decisionmakers, has a particular view of the organization. In a large organization, expending time and effort in disseminating the vision and in ensuring that members of the organization prosper if they use that vision as a guide to daily decisionmaking is necessary. Without dissemination, the vision will not be widely shared and thus, will not help the organization in resolving its problems. Without approbation and prosperity for personnel who adhere to the stated vision, the vision will be widely ignored or treated as nothing but a slogan, and top-level management will lose not only their ability to shape decisions deep in the corporate hierarchy, but also their credibility.

Therefore, organizations with a successful vision deliberately expend effort transmitting their organizational vision and trying to reward employees who apply it. Although IBM may be a geographically far-flung organization, it spends the money to bring managerial employees to a central location for their initial training.<sup>15</sup> Members of the organization see the constant application of IBM's organizational vision in the workplace, not just its declaration on bulletin boards. They can also see over the longer run that employees who bring the vision to life are rewarded.<sup>16</sup>

### The U.S. Navy's Naval Reactors Branch

Many examples of organizational vision exist besides IBM's in both the public and private sectors. Thanks to Adm. Hyman Rickover, the U.S. Navy's Naval Reactors Branch has had a clear vision since its inception: "engineering excellence, and an obsession with safety, in

<sup>14</sup>Xerox is a similar example: Its repairmen wear ties to show the gravity with which Xerox treats maintenance.

<sup>15</sup>This basic sales training course is 16 months long (Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, p. 161). See also Foy, *The Sun Never Sets*, pp. 2-3 (discussing indoctrination and training at IBM).

<sup>16</sup>For example, compensation, especially for senior management, depends crucially upon an employee's ability to fulfill the IBM vision of excellent customer service (Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, p. 161).

designing nuclear reactors."<sup>17</sup> To see that this vision was widely shared, Rickover personally interviewed every officer candidate for the branch<sup>18</sup> and would often present them with on-the-spot engineering problems.<sup>19</sup> He emphasized this vision in his daily interactions with all personnel under his command and in his dealings with Congress.<sup>20</sup>

### The U.S. Navy

In similar if less colorful fashion, the U.S. Navy went to great lengths in the 1980s to propagate its organizational vision in the cloak of the Maritime Strategy: a navy that would sweep the seas of its enemy as it moved forward quickly with its large carriers and attack submarines to strike the Soviet enemy's homeland on its maritime flanks.<sup>21</sup> This was a vision according to our definition because it

<sup>17</sup>On Rickover's concern with safety, see Patrick Tyler, *Running Critical: The Silent War, Rickover, and General Dynamics*, Harper and Row, New York, 1986, pp. 40, 41, 55. See also Eugene Lewis, *Public Entrepreneurship: Toward a Theory of Bureaucratic Political Power: The Organizational Lives of Hyman Rickover, J. Edgar Hoover, and Robert Moses*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind., 1980, p. 81 (the "Rickover approach . . . devoted attention to engineering aspects, including safety considerations"). Rickover's devotion to technical excellence was obvious even in his earliest years with the Navy (Lewis, *Public Entrepreneurship*, pp. 27-37).

<sup>18</sup>See Tyler, *Running Critical*, p. 23; Center for Study of Responsive Law, *No Holds Barred: The Final Congressional Testimony of Admiral Hyman Rickover*, 1982, p. 5 (quoting statement of Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson). See also Lewis, *Public Entrepreneurship*, p. 69 (Rickover interviewed all candidates for nuclear training in the Navy). Rickover's training of those slotted for command of a nuclear submarine was "extensive and personally supervised," partly because of his deep concern about safety (Lewis, *Public Entrepreneurship*, p. 67).

<sup>19</sup>According to Lewis, Rickover believed that he could tell about "brains, drive, technological competence, and capacity for leadership" from the interviews (p. 70). For a discussion that purports to offer detailed, typically unflattering recountings of several Rickover interviews, see Norman Polmar and Thomas B. Allen, *Rickover*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1982, pp. 269-291. The authors note, however, that "[r]ecords of almost anything to do with the Rickover interview are indeed impossible to find" (p. 275). See also Lewis, *Public Entrepreneurship*, pp. 69-70, for a description of the interviews in general terms.

<sup>20</sup>Lewis, *Public Entrepreneurship*, pp. 62, 79-80. Rickover opposed decentralization in management because he thought it reduced the need for specialized technical competence at the top (p. 62). Rickover himself reviewed—and imposed technical competence upon—a huge variety of the engineering decisions occurring under his command (pp. 58-59).

<sup>21</sup>Obviously, significant differences exist between what the Maritime Strategy says on its face and how it is interpreted in the real world. We have chosen our formulation as a reasonable, if blunt, interpretation. The definitive formulation of the Maritime Strategy is provided by James D. Watkins, "The Maritime Strategy," *The Maritime Strategy*, U.S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, Md., January 1986. Analyses of what the Maritime Strategy really means are legion and include: Builder, *The Army in the Strategic Planning Process*, pp. 62-71; Robert W. Komer, "Maritime Strategy vs. Coalition Defense," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 5, Summer 1982, p. 1124; and John J. Mearsheimer, "A



provides a widely shared, distinctive sense of identity and purpose that can be used to organize and motivate support both inside and outside the Navy.<sup>22</sup>

### Ford Motor Company

The elder Henry Ford had a vision as well: his company would build a low-cost, reliable car for the masses. The clarity and persistence of this vision can be inferred from the consistency with which it is described. Ford stated his goal as "a car that would meet the wants of the multitudes [a]nd, year following year, the pressure was . . . to improve and refine and make better, with an increasing reduction in price."<sup>23</sup> A Ford buff described Ford's crowning achievement as follows: "The production of automobiles in tremendous quantities and at low prices so that millions of people the world over could enjoy them was his essential contribution."<sup>24</sup> A more scholarly work describes Ford's vision as "to give the American people at last a truly durable and efficient low-cost automobile."<sup>25</sup>

All these are examples of organizational visions—and successful ones at that—under our definition. Our examples of organizational vision include those of organizations dominated by a single person (Ford at Ford Motor Company and Rickover at the Naval Reactors Branch) and those that have long since moved to group management (the Navy as a whole and IBM). An organizational vision may be easier to achieve during the early stages of an organization, when it may be dominated by a single person, but organizational vision can also exist in organizations large enough and mature enough that a single person cannot impose a vision upon the organization by sheer force of personality.

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Strategic Misstep: The Maritime Strategy and Deterrence in Europe," *International Security*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Fall 1986, pp. 2, 17-25.

<sup>22</sup>Indeed, the virtue of the Maritime Strategy as an organizing theme was specifically acknowledged by Watkins in "The Real Reformers," *The Maritime Strategy*, and in "Reforming the Navy from Within," *Defense 85*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., November 1985.

<sup>23</sup>Henry Ford, *My Life and Work*, Doubleday, Page and Company, Garden City, N.Y., 1922, as reprinted by Ayer Company Publishers, Salem, N.H., 1987, pp. 67-68.

<sup>24</sup>Floyd Clymer, *Henry's Wonderful Model T, 1908-1927*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1965, dedication. See also Keith Sward, *The Legend of Henry Ford*, Rinehart and Company, New York, 1948, pp. 24-26 (Fords were uniform, cheap, functional, and reliable).

<sup>25</sup>Allan Nevins, *Ford: The Times, the Man, the Company*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1964, p. 414; see also pp. 491-494.

## THE USE OF VISIONS

### Clarity, Relevance, and Realism

A crucial player in the evolution of IBM's modern vision, and the son of the unchallenged leader of its early days, has described the role and power of organizational visions as follows:

I firmly believe that any organization, in order to survive and achieve success, must have a sound set of beliefs on which it premises all its policies and actions. . . . [T]he basic philosophy, spirit, and drive of an organization have far more to do with its relative achievements than do technological or economic resources, organizational structure, innovation, and timing.<sup>26</sup>

An organizational vision can greatly assist a large organization in coordinating its complex and diverse activities and decisions. By transmitting the vision throughout the organization, leadership or management gives the organization's members a unified view of identity and purpose that is applicable to the decisions they make. To provide coordination or orientation in decisionmaking, the vision must be relevant—that is, it must provide members of an organization with clear and consistent insights into the actual, difficult decisions members of an organization face.

The organizational vision of IBM fits this bill. Should an IBM representative try to win a big new contract by submitting a bid that scrimps on customer service and support? No. The company doesn't underbid and then leave a customer holding the support bag, and since IBM presumably isn't in business to lose money, the representative should submit a bid that allows for a plentiful support budget. The IBM representative will probably explain to the customer that good service is cheaper in the long run once the proper costs—of shutting down operations while waiting for repairs, of trying to manage system software without the vendor's constant support, and so forth—are taken into account.

Other examples in which IBM's organizational vision would guide decisionmaking in a meaningful way are easy to imagine. Can an IBM vice president submit an R&D budget that may not put IBM in the technological lead in every category in which it competes? Yes. As long as IBM's technology is sufficiently advanced to allow it to serve the customer properly, the R&D budget will be consistent with IBM's organizational vision. A willingness to be behind the leading edge in some technologies is in fact a frequent complaint of some observers of

<sup>26</sup>Watson, *A Business and Its Beliefs*, p. 5.

IBM.<sup>27</sup> Can an IBM division manager submit a budget that terminates midcareer training and requires wholesale firings of employees? Not unless he plans to be fired himself. The company protects and develops its people, even at the expense of its short-term profits. It typically refrains from layoffs or firings, even during economic downturns, and prefers to retrain employees if keeping them in their current slot is uneconomical.<sup>28</sup> Should IBM acquire a ludicrously undervalued maker of baked goods? No, IBM makes computers, not cupcakes, even if there is an opportunity for profit in the cupcake industry.

With this organizational vision in place, IBM's midlevel and line employees can understand what top-level management wants, and top-level management can be more confident that its employees will make the proper decisions. The result is greater coordination that, we must emphasize, occurs without the expenditures of time and money that would be necessary if each of these decisions had to be processed through the typical decisionmaking loop of studies and meetings and action memos and oversight reviews.

Of course, IBM had to decide upon and disseminate its organizational vision in the first place, and must continue to maintain that vision by including it in employee training and so forth. An organizational vision in this sense is a kind of capital investment, though in intellectual rather than physical capital: It requires a significant initial investment and some maintenance, but allows for more efficient coordination for a long time once the investment has been made.

We can illustrate the relevance of other organizational visions: In making a personnel decision, should an officer in the Naval Reactors Branch recommend taking on a lieutenant with excellent marks in engineering but a lack of interest in athletics or social skills, or instead favor a "well-balanced" candidate? The answer under Rickover's vision is clear: pick the excellent engineer. In making a marketing decision, should a Ford executive in 1910 have spent a great deal of effort determining which color was preferred by potential customers? No.<sup>29</sup> He should spend time in constructing low-cost advertising schemes, or in constructing and supervising a dealer network to handle

<sup>27</sup>See Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, p. 178.

<sup>28</sup>Watson, *A Business and Its Beliefs*, pp. 15-16. More generally, see Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, pp. 258-260, for IBM's current policies with respect to its employees, and Belden and Belden, *The Lengthening Shadow*, pp. 150-157, for employee policies during the reign of the elder Watson.

<sup>29</sup>Despite Ford's widely known feelings on vehicular coloration—"The customer can have a Ford in any color he wants, as long as it's black!"—the Model T was available in a variety of colors from 1909 to 1913, and again in its final model years, 1926 and 1927 (Clymer, *Henry's Wonderful Model T*, p. 109).

unprecedentedly large sales volumes.<sup>30</sup> In making a budgetary decision, should the U.S. Navy care more about having 15 carriers or 15 minesweepers? The answer is carriers, because the Navy's organizational vision—as embodied in the Maritime Strategy—is about carrying the attack to the enemy, not lying in wait with mines.

In contrast, a vision not relevant to the decisions of a wide variety of an organization's members will prove little better than no vision at all. Caspar Weinberger's vision for the Defense Department was clear enough: "Obtain more of the nation's resources to rebuild the U.S. military forces to match the Soviet threat." In light of the neglect of the U.S. armed forces in the early and middle 1970s, this vision was in many ways sensible.<sup>31</sup> This vision also proved realistic, in the sense that Congress and the public were willing to devote great quantities of resources to implement the vision—at least for a few years.<sup>32</sup>

But, for people who were left to make operational decisions about where the money should go, or what else the military services should be doing, Weinberger's vision was not relevant. Were strategic forces more important than conventional forces? Was readiness to be favored over procurement? Did forces for contingencies in Southwest Asia deserve priority over those intended for use in Europe? All these questions were essentially unanswered by the department's more-is-more organizational vision of the early and middle 1980s. (The Navy had its Maritime Strategy to guide its decisions, but the other services lacked such a clear service-oriented organizational vision, and not even the Navy could claim that it was implementing a vision of national security as set forth by the highest civilian levels of government.<sup>33</sup>)

<sup>30</sup>During the Model T era, Ford in fact preferred word of mouth to costly print advertisements. The very early Fords were promoted by racing appearances. The Model T had Ford stamped prominently on its radiator and a distinctive silhouette, giving it a distinct identity without the need for extensive advertising. Even the multiplicity of jokes about the Model T was welcomed—it was free advertising, after all (Clymer, *Henry's Wonderful Model T*, p. 11).

<sup>31</sup>One can argue about whether the Soviet Union deserved top billing for every evil across the globe, but even a simple evaluation of the bilateral balance between the United States and the Soviet Union would lead to the conclusion that the United States had suffered a relative decline in the military balance.

<sup>32</sup>In terms of fiscal resources, spending in the national defense category rose 40 percent from fiscal year (FY) 1981 to FY 1986, measured in constant dollars (*Budget of the United States Government*, Table 19, p. 10-40). Between FY 1986 and FY 1988, national defense expenditures in constant dollars rose less than 4 percent.

<sup>33</sup>The Navy did the best among the military departments during this period, although its gains in the percentage of allocated Defense Department resources were not dramatic. This success may have been in part because it was alone in possessing a clear and attractive organizational vision—one that, probably not by coincidence, was also consistent with a large increase in the resources necessary to do its newly defined job. According to one naval expert, the Maritime Strategy implies a need for "a total of perhaps 20 or 25

As a result, coordination among the services was even poorer than usual, even during years of ballooning real defense budgets. When the balloons began to deflate, the Weinberger vision offered little guidance to personnel who needed to formulate budgetary cuts.

A much more damaging failure of vision stemmed from the inability of the U.S. government, including the Army, to formulate a relevant vision to guide it in Vietnam. The United States gave first its treasure and then its blood in the service of a vision that might be expressed as something like "stopping communism in South Vietnam." But this vision was not relevant enough to provide guidance on what to do to effect this vision. Was the war one of insurgency or invasion? Was it chiefly a political or a military struggle? Was it a war to support an ally, or a fight to keep communism out of South Vietnam, even if the United States had to do so without the aid of an effective or democratically inclined ally? Was winning the war worth a lot or a little to the United States?<sup>34</sup>

To the extent that the United States did not know why it was involved in Vietnam, or did not know what it wanted before it left, the political and military arms of the U.S. government that had operational responsibility for Vietnam lacked a relevant organizational vision.<sup>35</sup> This confusion persists even with hindsight. One widely read analysis advances a vision for Vietnam along the lines of World War II, with a full mobilization of public support and an American strategy that allowed for at least some strategic initiative—though the author is uncomfortably aware of the political constraints that would have

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large carriers," and even the 600-ship Navy "is what the United States can hope to afford, not what its naval strategy requires" (Norman Friedman, *The U.S. Maritime Strategy*, Jane's, London, 1988, pp. 199, 200).

<sup>34</sup>The definitive description of the U.S. government's failure to come to grips with these questions during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations remains David Halberstam's admixture of Proust and *People* magazine, *The Best and the Brightest*, Random House, New York, 1972. A briefer recounting of governmental policymaking toward Vietnam from the Eisenhower through the Ford administrations is Barbara Tuchman's *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1984, pp. 234-377.

<sup>35</sup>In a written survey, Army generals commanding in Vietnam were asked, "If we had to do it over, in what areas would you recommend the greatest changes?" Of the respondents, 91 percent included "defining the objectives" among their answers, which tied with "improving the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam [South Vietnam])" as the most frequently chosen response (Douglas Kinnard, *The War Managers*, University Press of New England, Hanover, N.H., 1977, p. 176). Only 29 percent of that same sample thought the United States' pre-1969 objectives in Vietnam were "clear and understandable," and only 20 percent thought that lower echelons seemed to understand those objectives (p. 169). Note, however, that another 20 percent also thought it unimportant for lower echelons to understand those objectives.

applied to such a strategy.<sup>36</sup> Other analyses argue, in almost diametric opposition, that the Army's biggest mistake was in trying to relive World War II and fight large-unit, high-firepower military actions in a nation of jungles and uncertain sentiments.

[V]ictory in the Ia Drang battle reinforc[ed] a big-unit high-tech doctrine of search and destroy, itself the wisdom of World War II as distilled by Fort Benning.<sup>37</sup>

In this environment, it is not surprising that American actions hardly appeared as part of a coordinated whole, whether they were in-country operations or attempts to explain the war effort to the American public.

Not all bad organizational visions are simply unclear. Some may be inconsistent instead, but the effect on the organization is similar. "The highest technology at the lowest price," for example, is a vision that would not provide members of the organization with consistent advice: Technological excellence and low price are typically competing, not complementary, goals. Disseminating this vision broadly will contribute little to coordinating the diverse actions of employees in the organization. Some members of the organization will choose high technology, others low cost, and others some mixture—while all may be doing their best to adhere to the (inconsistent) organizational vision. Organizational visions can also be inconsistent over time. Centralized decisionmakers who zig with one sense of identity and purpose one year and then zag with another vision the next year will confuse those who look to their decisions for validation of, and guidance from, the implied vision.

In contrast, a consistent, relevant organizational vision will not only increase coordination in the large organization, but will also encourage the exercise of individual initiative. The IBM salesman can—and, typically, must—choose how to make a presentation to a potential customer that demonstrates IBM's commitment to service. The naval nuclear engineer is free to exercise his technical skills with initiative, as long as he makes safety his watchword. The Ford engineer always

<sup>36</sup>Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, Dell, New York, 1982. For a similar view, see Palmer, *The 25-Year War*, pp. 176–179.

<sup>37</sup>John Shy, "First Battles in Retrospect," in Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft (eds.), *America's First Battles, 1776–1965*, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1986, p. 333. For a book-length treatment from the same perspective, see Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*. A reviewer of *The Army and Vietnam* called it a "masterful account," but advanced yet another thesis about the Army's difficulties: that the "character and composition" of South Vietnamese forces and government were especially important in determining the outcome of the war (Ronald H. Spector, "U.S. Army Strategy in the Vietnam War: Book Review," *International Security*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Spring 1987, p. 133).

had to keep an eye on costs. Close supervision is less necessary because the line decisionmakers can be trusted to make decisions similar to those that would be made by the top-level decisionmakers. The Army's keystone war-fighting manual states:

If an unanticipated situation arises, committed maneuver unit commanders should understand the purpose of the operation well enough to act decisively, confident that they are doing what their superior commander would order done were he present.<sup>38</sup>

In some sense, a relevant organizational vision allows an organization to obtain both more coordination and more initiative, rather than having to trade more of one for less of the other. Once more, an analogy exists on the battlefield:

If subordinates are to exercise initiative without endangering the overall success of the force, they must thoroughly understand the commander's intent and the situational assumptions on which it was based. In turn, the force commander must encourage subordinates to focus their operations on the overall mission, and give them the freedom and responsibility to develop opportunities which the force as a whole can exploit to accomplish the mission more effectively.<sup>39</sup>

The battle plan, in other words, takes the place of the sense of purpose essential to any organizational vision, and the source and meaning of that purpose are often best found in the sense of identity in every organizational vision. More elbow room allows initiative to swing more freely, and the organization's members will strike their blows, not wildly, but directed by the organizational vision.

In contrast, the lack of a consistent, relevant American vision with respect to Vietnam was partly responsible for a greatly reduced sphere for the exercise of individual initiative. Politicians, uncertain of just what they wanted, very tightly constrained the military's initiative. President Lyndon Johnson employed notoriously centralized decision-making and close monitoring:

[H]e alone exercised control—and with prodigious attention to detail. He made appointments, approved promotions, reviewed troop requests, determined deployments, selected bombing targets, and restricted aircraft sorties. Night after night, wearing a dressing gown and carrying a flashlight, he would descend into the White House basement "situation room" to monitor the conduct of the conflict, hovering above the military and civilian specialists collating reports from Saigon or Danang or Bienhoa. Often, too, he would doze by his

<sup>38</sup>U.S. Army Field Manual 100-5, 1986, p. 22. With a few obvious word substitutions, the same words could describe the impact of an organizational vision on a large business.

<sup>39</sup>U.S. Army Field Manual 100-5, 1986, p. 15.

bedside telephone, waiting to hear the outcome of a mission to rescue one of "my pilots" shot down over Haiphong or Vinh or Thai Nguyen. It was his war.<sup>40</sup>

Higher-level military commanders, reflecting that concern (and also taking advantage of new technologies), exercised very tight control over the operations of their subordinates. Subordinates, deprived of a clear vision from above, spent much time divining and providing what their superiors wanted to hear.

### Inspiration

Properly chosen, an organizational vision can inspire members of an organization. Indeed, to have a shared purpose is almost a prerequisite to inspiration. An organizational vision can appeal to a sense of purpose that goes beyond the individual. Not every organizational vision is inherently inspiring, of course: "Defraud the customer and relocate fast enough to avoid prosecution" could be a shared sense of purpose, but many would fail to find it inspiring. Determining what is an inspiring organizational vision depends in large part upon the more general identity and purpose of an organization. "To lead the way in the exploration of space" is an inspiring vision, for example, but it is unlikely to be appropriate for a paper-products firm.

The degree to which a vision is inspiring will depend in part upon the kinds of skills crucial to achieving an organization's general purpose. "To be number one in sales" may be an inspiring vision for a mail-order wholesaler that will prosper in proportion to its ability to motivate clerks and phone operators. Hyman Rickover and Henry Ford created organizations full of engineers, however, and their visions needed to be (and were) inspiring to engineers, not to clerks and phone operators. The U.S. Navy and IBM require a broader range of skills to succeed in their purpose; their visions, though quite different from one another, are inspiring in a broader sense.

### Public Image

The same broad brush strokes—of identity and purpose—that can paint an organizational vision in the minds of thousands of employees also creates a picture in the public eye. A potential customer may say, "IBM is a computer firm that will care about my needs," and thus be favorably inclined to choose IBM over firms with a lesser reputation

<sup>40</sup>Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History*, Penguin Books, Middlesex, England, 1983, p. 322. See also p. 541 for a description of Johnson's behavior with respect to Khesanh.



for customer support. "The Navy will take the war to the Soviets in their own front yard" is an image the Navy would like to leave with Congress in the pursuit of funding to fulfill the Maritime Strategy. Indeed, Friedman lists a "public image" as the first of three reasons that the Navy promulgated the Maritime Strategy:

The Maritime Strategy had three complementary roots. One was a demand, voiced by then Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, that the Navy make its fundamental ideas more explicit so that they could be coherently presented to Congress. To the extent that the Navy's programme showed greater coherence, Congress would find it more logical and attractive. Earlier programmes, which seemed much more ad hoc, had often been attacked as such, and whittled down.<sup>41</sup>

And a large organization with a widely shared vision has already enlisted tens of thousands of proselytizers on its behalf without spending a single dollar on advertising or flip charts. Employees who understand the organizational vision can convey that vision to all those they meet, and thereby directly construct the organization's public image. Almost every IBM employee, or every naval officer who served under Rickover, can convincingly explain those organizations' respective visions. To hear it from their lips is much more convincing than reading about it in predigested annual reports or congressional testimony.

Having some clear public image is an advantage in the keen competition for the limited attentions of consumers or Congressmen. At least they have heard of you and know what you have to offer. But whether what you have to offer is what they want to buy or fund—and therefore whether the organizational vision is realistic in terms of being able to attract the resources necessary to make it a reality—is another matter. Here an organization would ideally have a vision, and therefore a public image, that also fits with society's vision of what society needs. A strong identification with computers helps IBM a great deal when computers are much in demand, and Rickover's success in the battle for funding was based in large measure on Congress' feeling that it needed a nuclear Navy. If an organization can change with, or even anticipate, the needs of customers or congressmen, it will be lauded for its foresight—its "vision," in a different sense of the word than we have been using it here—in providing the right service or strategy at the right time.

In contrast, organizations that cling to an organizational vision (and resulting public image) and that do not attract resources to them may be

<sup>41</sup>Friedman, *The U.S. Maritime Strategy*, p. 6. The other two roots of the Maritime Strategy, according to Friedman, are the need for a relevant vision to decide budgetary issues given the inevitability of scarce resources and a renewed interest in war-fighting operations and tactics (pp. 7-8).

able to live off their accumulated efficiencies for some time, but in the long run they will need to adopt a more attractive and realistic vision or suffer a significant decline. Such was the fate of the railroads; such would even have been the fate of the Ford Motor Company but for the passing of its founder. The crucial modification to Ford Motor Company's vision was from being Henry Ford's company to being a publicly held, decentralized, modern corporation.<sup>42</sup> The vision of an inexpensive, durable car for the masses persisted, however, at least in the mind of one architect of the "new" Ford Motor Company, Robert McNamara. "[I]t was McNamara's particular genius to raise the quality without raising the cost, a supreme act of cost effectiveness."<sup>43</sup> McNamara's "greatest triumph was the Falcon, the . . . definitive utilitarian car, the direct descendant of the Model T, his ultimate contribution to cost effectiveness."<sup>44</sup> McNamara made it to the presidency of Ford, in fact, but his chance to continue implementing this vision from the top was cut short by his appointment as secretary of defense in the Kennedy administration.

A more contemporary example of a shift in vision may be in the making at Sears, Roebuck. Sears modified its organizational vision several decades ago in changing its focus from mail-order to high-volume retail sales. Now, prodded by diminutions in its ability to attract resources in the form of sales or high stock prices, Sears has shifted quite recently to a discount-oriented marketing philosophy.<sup>45</sup> Whether Sears has faced the depth of changes this shift may provoke if it is truly incorporated into a new organizational vision, and whether the shift is sufficient to reverse adverse trends in Sear's ability to attract external resources, are open questions.

That organizations with relevant inspiring visions leading to attractive public images should be successful organizations is not surprising. The success of IBM has truly been phenomenal<sup>46</sup>: The company has been consistently quite profitable, and is looked to as a leader in both

<sup>42</sup>See Allan Nevins and Frank Ernest Hill, *Ford: Decline and Rebirth, 1933-1962*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1963. Also see Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*, pp. 282-286.

<sup>43</sup>See Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*, p. 284.

<sup>44</sup>Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*, p. 290.

<sup>45</sup>See "The Big Markdown," *Business Week*, March 13, 1989, p. 110; "A Season of Hope at Sears," *U.S. News and World's Report*, Dec. 11, 1989, p. 52; Eric N. Berg, "Keys to Sears Turnaround: Patience," *New York Times*, Jan. 15, 1990, p. D1.

<sup>46</sup>As one writer has said, "By virtually any measure, IBM is the most successful American corporation in all of the nation's history" (Sobel, *IBM vs. Japan*, p. 82). The stock of IBM had a total valuation as of December 31, 1987, of \$71 billion—higher than any other corporation on the New York Stock Exchange (*Information Please Almanac* 1989, p. 58). This is so even though the assets of both General Motors and Exxon have a greater monetary valuation than IBM's (p. 56). Needless to say, IBM's bond rating is the highest possible, Aaa (*Moody's Industrial Manual* 1988, Vol. 1, p. 448).

marketing and employment practices. The U.S. Navy has been more successful with the aid of the Maritime Strategy than when no organizational vision served as its rudder:

[T]he existence of an explicit naval doctrine has enormously helped the Navy in selling its ideas [in the larger world of government], to the extent that the other services, which have decided not to develop comparable strategy, have complained of their disadvantage.<sup>47</sup>

Within the Navy, the Nuclear Reactors Branch, equipped with a vision of engineering excellence and safety, has continued to prosper despite Admiral Rickover's departure from the scene. Finally, Ford Motor Company not only made phenomenal profits in the heyday of its founder's vision, but has recently done well enough with its updated organization to pass General Motors on occasion in absolute profits, despite significantly smaller revenues.

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<sup>47</sup>Friedman, *The U.S. Maritime Strategy*, p. 16.